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ABSTRACT

An attempt is made to trace the history of every major library in Malay and Singapore. Social and recreational club libraries are not included, and school libraries are not extensively covered. Although it is possible to trace the history of Malaysia's libraries back to the first millenium of the Christian era, there are few written records pre-dating World War II. The lack of documentation on the early periods of library history creates an emphasis on developments in the modern period. This is not out of order since it is only recently that libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore have been recognized as one of the important media of mass education. Lack of funds, failure to recognize the importance of libraries, and problems caused by the federal structure of government are blamed for this delay in development. Hinderances to future development are the lack of trained librarians, problems of having to provide material in several different languages, and the lack of national bibliographies, union catalogs and lists of serials. (SJ)

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LIBRARIES IN WEST MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

a short history

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To my wife, **PEARLY**

PREFACE

THIS book is based on the thesis which I submitted in partial fulfilment of the diploma of librarianship at the University of New South Wales in 1962. Because of a number of requests by librarians and library students for microfilm copies of this work, a decision was made to publish it so that it would become more freely available. In view of the need to bring this work out as quickly as possible, it has not been possible to revise it as extensively as it would perhaps have been desirable. The library situation as well as the political situation have changed with bewildering speed since 1962 in both Singapore and West Malaysia (or Malaya as it was then called) so that some of the comments made in this book may be dated. An attempt has been made to bring the situation up-to-date in the case of some Malaysian Libraries, such as the University of Malaya Library, and by including an epilogue on recent developments in West Malaysia. But no attempt has been made to up-date the Singapore library scene, since to have done so would probably have involved writing a new book. In spite of this, it is hoped that this book will prove to be of value to those who are interested in the history of libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore. It may be appropriate to point out that in this book the terms Malaya, West Malaysia and Federation of Malaya have been used synonymously to denote the same geographical area.

Anyone who endeavours to write a history of libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore cannot hope to produce a comprehensive or definitive account, largely because much of the early history of Malaysian and Singapore libraries is obscure. There are hardly any written records pre-dating World War II, despite the fact that it is possible to trace the history of Malaysia's libraries to as far back as the first millenium of the Christian era. This lack of records can be explained by the fact that libraries never played a very important part in the lives of the people of West Malaysia and Singapore, and in consequence have been largely ignored by the social historian.

The lack of documentation on the early periods of library history has led inevitably to an emphasis on developments in the modern period. This is not entirely out of order since the history of libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore really begins with the modern period of their history, and particularly after World War II. It is only in recent years that libraries have come to their own in West Malaysia and Singapore, and are now recognized as one of the important media of mass education.

Attempt has been made in this book to trace the history of every major library in West Malaysia and Singapore of whatever kind. Only the libraries of social and recreational clubs have been omitted, while discussion on school libraries is perhaps not as complete as could be possible.

It is inevitable that anyone writing a work of this nature, unless he is a monster of omniscience, must deal with a great many matters of which he has no firsthand knowledge. I am indebted to the librarians and other personnel of various institutions in West Malaysia and Singapore who have kindly provided me with the information required by patiently replying to my questionnaires and letters and by submitting to personal interviews. My debt to them will be apparent in the bibliography which appears at the end of this book.

I should like to mention in particular my debt to Mr. Beda Lim, Librarian, University of Malaya, for agreeing to publish this book despite all its imperfections, and to the Perak Turf Club, without whose financial help, this book would not have been published. My heartfelt thanks to them and all others who in one way or another helped me in the writing of this book, and my apologies for any inadvertent omissions in acknowledging my debt.

E.L.H.T.

Kuala Lumpur, April 1968

ABBREVIATIONS

Bull. USIS, Singapore	Bulletin of the U.S. Information Service in Singapore.
IL	Indian Librarian.
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.
LAR	Library Association Record.
LLAB	Louisiana Library Association Bulletin.
LT	Library Trends.
MHJ	Malayan Historical Journal.
MLGN	Malayan Library Group Newsletter.
MLJ	Malayan Library Journal.
MM	Malayan Mirror.
P.P.P.T.M.	Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu. (Library Association of the Federation of Malaya).
Q. Bull. IAALD	Quarterly Bulletin of the International Association of Agricultural Libraries and Documentalists.
SLJ	Singapore Library Journal.
WLB	Wilson Library Bulletin.

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LIBRARIES IN WEST MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

CHAPTER I

BOOKS AND LIBRARIES IN MALAYSIA BEFORE THE COMING OF THE WEST

A. *Libraries*

It is generally thought that no library of importance existed in Malaya prior to the coming of the British, as the earliest library existing in Malaya today—the Penang Library—dates from the days of British rule. However, an examination of the scanty evidence at present available reveals that books and libraries were not unknown to the ancient and medieval Malaysian world.

THE HINDU PERIOD

Malaya, and indeed the whole of South-East Asia, was strongly subjected to the cultural and civilizing influence of India, and to a more limited extent, to the political and commercial influence of China, during the first thousand years or more of the Christian era. The Indians originally came to trade, being attracted by the tin, scented woods and spices of the East, which were in very great demand by the peoples of the early Roman Empire. Gradually, however, the traders were followed by the Buddhist priests, Brahmins and the literati, who brought with them their religions, art, literature, script, law and political systems. By the second century A.D., various Indianized states "practising Indian religions, arts and customs, and with Sanskrit as their sacred language" had grown up "around sites which Indian seamen had frequented from time immemorial."[1]

Various Indianized kingdoms existed on the Malay Peninsula. These included Langkasuka, founded on the north-east coast in the second century A.D., and ancient Kedah in the north-west, which was a flourishing trade emporium. Generally speaking, however, up to 1400 A.D., Malaya did not exist as a separate political entity, and was at one time or another a part of the various Indianized empires which were centred on island or mainland South-East Asia. Malaya's strategic position in the East–West trade made her the frequent prey of her neighbours. Among the empires that have controlled Malaya were Funan, Sri Vijaya and Majapahit. It is in these early empires, which were culturally identical, that we find our first mention of libraries.

Funan. There is some literary evidence to suggest that there were libraries of sorts in the early kingdom of Funan, which flourished from about the first century A.D. to 637 A.D. At the height of its power, Funan, which was based in what is now modern Cambodia, reached as far as Tongkin in the Indian Ocean in the west, and had control over the small states that had established themselves on the Malay Peninsula in the south.[2] K'ang Tai, a member of the mission from China which visited Funan in the middle of the third century A.D., mentions that the kingdom possessed "books and depositories of archives."[3] As in ancient Egypt, the earliest libraries in South-East Asia were probably government or temple archives.

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[1] D.G.E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p.13.

[2] F.J. Moorhead, *A History of Malaya and Her Neighbours* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1957), I, p.45.

It is possible, however, that collections of sacred works existed in the various Buddhist monasteries which dotted the empire. According to Ma Tuan-lin, even the little kingdom of P'an P'an founded in the third century A.D. by the great Funanese general, Fan Shih-man, on Malaya's east coast, had "ten monasteries where Buddhist monks and nuns study their canon."[4]

Sri Vijaya. In the seventh century A.D., Malaya fell within the sphere of influence of the Sumatran Buddhist kingdom of Sri Vijaya, which had its southern capital at Palembang in southern Sumatra and its northern capital in Kedah on Malaya's north-west. Sri Vijaya was famed as the centre of Mahayana Buddhism, and apparently was second in prestige only to the Buddhist University of Nalanda in East Bengal, India.[5] The famous Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited it in 671 A.D. tells us that at Sri Vijaya

> Buddhist priests number more than one thousand whose minds are bent on learning and good practices. They investigate and study all the subjects that exist just as in the Middle Kingdom; the rules and ceremonies are not at all different. If a Chinese priest wishes to go the west [India] in order to hear [lectures] and read [the original texts] he had better stay here one or two years and practice the proper rules...[6]

I-tsing himself spent some six months in Sri Vijaya studying Sanskrit grammar before going on to India, an eloquent testimonial of Sri Vijaya's importance as a centre of Mahayana Buddhist learning.[7]

We can be quite certain that collections of Buddhist sacred works existed at Sri Vijaya because I-tsing returned there in 685 A.D. after a long period of study at the Buddhist University of Nalanda in India, and spent four years translating the Buddhist texts from Sanskrit into Chinese. I-tsing collected so many manuscripts for transcription that he had to return to China to get more paper and ink. After his return he completed his transcriptions and finally was able to take nearly four hundred different Buddhist texts back to China. According to Vlekke, the books at Sri Vijaya "were probably written on palm leaves."[8]

It is hardly surprising that the Buddhist monastery or monasteries at Sri Vijaya should have contained important collections of sacred Buddhist works, for the Buddhist monasteries were the great civilizing and humanizing factors in South-East Asia at this period, and played as important a role in the diffusion of learning as the Christian monasteries did in Europe during the Middle Ages.[9] Even to-day, the monasteries of the Buddhist countries of Thailand and Burma are important educational institutions.

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[3] Hall, p.26.

[4] Ma Tuan-lin, *Wen-hsien T'ung-k'ao.* Quoted in Paul Wheatley, *The Golden Khersonese...* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1961), p.49.

[5] Hall, p.37.

[6] Quoted by Bernard H.M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia* (Rev. ed.; The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1959), p.27.

[7] Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia: A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1954), p.24.

[8] Vlekke, p.28.

The collections of sacred works at Sri Vijaya could not have differed much in scope and content from the various Buddhist collections known to have existed in India. Syed Mahmud records that during the Gupta and Pala periods in India, there were as many as eighteen Buddhist "universities" in what are now Bengal and Bihar.[10]

There is no extant description of the library or libraries of Sri Vijaya. However, considering the cultural and political heritage of Sri Vijaya, we may say that they probably resembled those which were maintained in Buddhist India. According to Syed Mahmud, the classical Buddhist library plan, as typified by the University of Nalanda Library, consisted of "the Reading Hall with reading desks arranged in rows and side walls packed with shelves of books."[11] On the wall facing the entrance was a collection of Buddhist deities with Bhyani Buddha, and the Buddhist priest or student entering the library "offered prayer to him and thereafter turned to their books in a spirit of devotion and reverence."[12] The Buddhist library plan spread to various parts of Asia, notably to Indo-China, Thailand, Burma and Tibet.[13]

Majapahit. In the fourteenth century, Sri Vijaya was overwhelmed by the Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, which, under its Chief Minister and *de facto* ruler, Gajah Mada (1330–64), was expanded to include most of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula as far north as Kedah, Langkasuka and Patani, the south and west coasts of Borneo, and southern Celebes and the Moluccas. The empire also claimed a protectorate over the countries of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, including Thailand, Cambodia, Champa and Annam.[14]

Extant evidence indicates that the "libraries" of Majapahit were largely state and temple archives. But it is likely that the various Buddhist monasteries also had their sacred collections. Under Gajah Mada, the Buddhist and Shivaist organizations formed part of state institutions, and the superintendents of the clergy were high state officials.[15] As in the early Middle Ages in Europe, the art of reading and writing was known to a relatively small number of individuals, and of these most belonged to the priesthood. According to Prapanca, the head of the Buddhist clergy, who composed the poem *Nagarakertagama* in 1365, it was the duty of the priests and monks to take care of the archives.[16] Each convent and each temple had its own charters and documents. Apparently, when Gajah Mada became the Chief Minister of the Majapahit empire, he had a general survey made of the temple archives, and documents which had been lost were replaced by new copies.[17]

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[9] David Diringer, *The Alphabet...* (London: Hutchinson's Scientific and Technical Publications, 1947), p.401.

[10] Syed Mahmud, "The Evolution of Libraries in the Ancient and Medieval Period of History," *IL*, 5:84, December, 1950.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Harrison, p.49.

[15] Vlekke, p.76.

[16] *Ibid.*

We have shown that libraries in the form of monastic and temple collections or state archives existed in the early Indianized empires of South-East Asia. It is a matter of conjecture whether any royal or private libraries also existed. In India, as Agrawal has pointed out, a strong library tradition existed from very early times, so that in spite of their scarcity,

> books, written on palm leaf or birch bark, were prepared and stocked by those who could afford the expense.... Kings, temples and monasteries, and rich men of taste had their collections of books.[18]

The ancient Indians "attached very great importance to the maintenance of Libraries"[19] and similar ideas also prevailed "in distant Indian colonies of Cambodia, Champa and Jawa."[20] The similarities in the culture and society of the kingdoms of South-East Asia with those of India in the ancient and medieval periods of history make it extremely likely that royal and private collections were kept.

The book in the Hindu period of South-East Asia's history was a highly prized possession, doubtless because of its scarcity and its religious content. Not infrequently, books figured among the gifts exchanged between heads of state. For example, the *Sung Dynasty history* contains a record of a gift of "Sanskrit books folded between boards" made by a Sumatran prince in 1017 to the Emperor of China.[21]

THE MALACCA SULTANATE

About 1400, a prince named Parameswara from Singapore (then known as Tumasek) established a dynasty in Malacca on the west coast of Malaya. This event marked the beginning of Malaya's divorce from the political influence of her neighbours and her existence as a separate "historical, political, cultural and geographical entity, rather than a peripheral and shadowy appendix to other histories and other cultures."[22]

The kingdom of Malacca differed from the earlier empires in that it was under the influence of a new cultural force—Islam—which had been brought to South-East Asia in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries from India by Gujerati and Bengali merchants, and had been established on the coastal states of Sumatra. Malacca, because of her dominant position on the Straits of Malacca, soon became the spearhead of the further advance of Islam. By 1400, Majapahit had become a waning power, and was therefore unable to prevent the infiltration of Islam into her territories or to obstruct the growth of Malacca, which rapidly became an important commercial and political power. As Islam spread, one after another of Majapahit's vassal states broke away, and by the fifteenth century, the imperial power of Majapahit had been destroyed by the Muslim conquests. At the close of the fifteenth century, Malacca had established herself as the leading commercial and political power on the Straits.

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[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Jagan Nath Agrawal, "Libraries in Ancient India," *IL*, 8(4):142, March 1954.

[19] *Ibid.*, p.143.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] W.P. Groeneveldt, "Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca," *Miscellaneous Papers relating to Indo-China and the Indian Archipelago* (2nd ser.; London: Trubner, 1887), p.190.

[22] Norton Ginsburg and Chester F. Roberts, *Malaya* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), p.26.

It is sometimes claimed that libraries were anathema to the followers of the Prophet and that they were ruthless destroyers of the books and libraries of their enemies. But, as Plumbe has clearly demonstrated, this claim is largely fictitious and far from being hostile to books and libraries, the Muslims themselves have been responsible for the establishment of relatively large private, public and academic libraries in Egypt, Persia, Arabia, and at widely scattered places throughout North Africa "several centuries before books and libraries existed in most of the countries of Europe."[23]

The average Muslim possesses a great reverence for books and learning. The Koran frequently exhorts him to "seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."[24] He is told that "to seek knowledge is the duty of every Muslim" and that "the ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr."[25]

Under the Malacca Sultans, these injunctions of the Koran were faithfully followed, and the court was the centre of great learning and study. Malacca was famed in the Malay world as the centre of mystic learning and the diffusion of Islam.[26] Not all learning was confined to the study of the Koran. As Winstedt has pointed out, the Malacca court was also the scene of great literary activity stimulated by many contacts with Java, India and Arabia.[27] Although Malacca was a Muslim state, it did not make a complete break with the past but retained many of the complex traditions and cultures inherited from the earlier Indianized states. Much of the Malay literature of this period consisted of modifications of earlier Hindu and Buddhist tales and legends.[28] There were clearly means of acquiring knowledge other than the Koranic texts, for the author of the *Sejarah Melayu* (or *Malay Annals*), the indigenous history of the Malacca Sultanate written in the sixteenth century, was familiar not only with the Koran, but also with Sanskrit, Persian, Tamil and Javanese literature.[29]

It is unlikely that there were libraries in Malacca comparable in size to those established by the Arabs in the Middle East during the Middle Ages. The libraries of Malacca were probably small collections owned by the aristocracy, the clergy or the Sultans, who constituted the main literate population of old Malacca.

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[23] Wilfred J. Plumbe, "The Libraries of Mediaeval Islam," *MLJ*, 2(4):130, July 1962.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] R.J. Wilkinson, "The Malacca Sultanate," *JMBRAS*, 13(2): 47, October, 1935.

[27] R.O. Winstedt, "A History of Malaya," *JMBRAS*, 13(1):47, March, 1935.

[28] R.O. Winstedt, *The Malays: A Cultural History* (rev. ed; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950), chap. viii.

[29] Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, 13(1):49, March, 1935.

B. *Writing*

No indigenous script is known to have existed in the Malay Peninsula.[30] It seems that the Malay did not know how to write until the Indian taught him. During the one thousand years that the Malay was under the influence of the Hinduized courts, he borrowed two Indian scripts, "the Pallavan from which Java as early as the eighth century A.D. evolved its *kawi* alphabet and the *nagari* script brought in the eighth century by the Palas from Bengal."[31] The advent of Islam and later of the West introduced the Malay to the Perso-Arabic alphabet and the Roman alphabet respectively. Either of these alphabets is used by the educated Malay to-day.

Writing was a skill enjoyed by only a select few. In the Hindu period of Malaya's history, the Brahmans and the Buddhist priests were practically the only people possessing this knowledge. During the period of the Malacca Sultanate, and until as late as the nineteenth century, the knowledge of writing was possessed largely by the secretaries or scribes in the households of the Sultans and Malay Chieftains.[32] Although many Sultans and Chiefs were literate, they usually employed secretaries to do the actual writing. The secretaries were men of varied status and qualifications. The majority were commoners, but a few had aristocratic connections.[33]

Writing enjoyed great prestige, and the use of written documents was confined to major acts of state. According to Gullick,

> Its use was to provide evidence of an important decision; not of the exchange of opinion leading up to it. Writing was used to record the agreement of chiefs to elect a Sultan, the appointment of a district chief or of a village headman, the grant of a territory and terms of a treaty. It was also less often used to preserve accounts and for private memoranda.[34]

C. *Writing Materials*

Despite the existence of a great deal of folk-lore, the early literature of the Malay was largely adaptations from the Buddhist jataka tales and from the great Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. We do not know when this literature was first written down. The earliest extant book found in the Malay Peninsula is the *Sejarah Melayu*, a paper manuscript, written in the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, we know that books written on material other than paper and at an earlier date existed, partly from literary evidence and partly from surviving Indonesian manuscripts.

The writing materials used by the peoples of Malaya and elsewhere in South-East Asia before they were instructed in the use of paper, can be divided into two main groups: (1) Permanent, or Durable material, e.g., stone and metal; and (2) Perishable material, e.g., palm or other kinds of leaf, tree bark and bamboo.

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[30] Diringer, *The Alphabet...*, p.421.

[31] Winstedt, *The Malays...*, p.139.

[32] J.M. Gullick, *Indigenous Political Systems of Western Malaya* (London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1958), p.53.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*, pp.52–53.

PERMANENT MATERIALS

Stone appears to have been one of the earliest materials used for writing. Strictly speaking, stone inscriptions cannot be called books. However, stone was a popular medium of writing with the early Indian traders and rulers of the early empires of Malaysia. Several stone inscriptions have been found on the Malay Peninsula as well as throughout South-East Asia.[35] These were mainly of three types: dedicatory, devotive, or descriptive of some important historical event.

The closest approach to a "book" on durable material discovered in Malaya is a sun-dried brick tablet found in the late 1930's on the site of ancient Kedah by Dr. Quaritch Wales, an eminent archaeologist. This tablet, which recalls the Mesopotamian clay tablets, tapers towards either end and is inscribed on three faces in the Pallava script of the sixth century A.D., or possibly earlier. Each face carries two lines making a complete verse in Sanskrit. The three Sanskrit verses embody the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism.[36]

Metal, such as gold beaten into a leaf, was sometimes used as a writing material. No evidence exists that it was ever used for book production in the ordinary sense of the term. But letters addressed to kings and other dignitaries were frequently written on gold leaf. The Chinese chronicles record several instances of gold leaf letters sent by the princes of Malaya and elsewhere to the Emperors of China.[37] In ancient and medieval times, it appears that the material used for a letter was frequently an indication of the social standing of the person to whom it was addressed.

PERISHABLE MATERIALS

Of the perishable materials, the most commonly used were palm leaves, tree bark and bamboo. The writing material which appears to have had the most widespread use was the palm leaf. Many palm leaf manuscripts have fortunately survived the ravages of time and climate, and to-day, there are extensive collections of these in Java, Bali and Burma.[38]

Although no palm leaf manuscripts have been found on the Malay Peninsula, it is known that the palm leaf was used as a writing material by the indigenous inhabitants of Malaya from very early times until as late as the nineteenth century.[39] There are many references in Chinese chronicles to the use of palm leaves by the inhabitants of Malaya. Thus the *Ming Dynasty history* states that the people of Johore, South Malaya, "write on kajang leaves, tracing the letters with a knife."[40] Kajang was the general name for different palm leaves used for writing and other purposes.

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[35] K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Ancient Contacts between India and South-East Asia," *MHJ*, 1(1):11–15, May, 1954.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[37] Thus the *Ming Dynasty history* succinctly states that in the year 1378, the Sultan of Pahang, "Maharaja Tajau, sent envoys with a letter, written on a gold leaf, and bringing as tribute six foreign slaves, and products of the country." See Groeneveldt, pp. 126–262, for further examples.

[38] Wilfred J. Plumbe, "Books and Writing in the Tropics before the Invention of Printing," *MLJ*, 2(1):46, October, 1961.

[39] T.J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca...* (London: Murray, 1839), II, p. 194.

The palm leaf employed by the peoples of South-East Asia was not that which was widely used in India—the Talipat palm—for the simple reason that it could not be found there.[41] That used in the Malay world was the *lontar* (or *borassus flabelliformis*).[42] Undoubtedly, the Indian, who in all probability taught the Malay how to use the *lontar* as a writing material just as he had taught him how to write, chose that material because it most closely resembled the palm leaf used in his own homeland.

According to Crawford, the palm leaves received no other preparation than that of being dried and cut into slips. The instrument for writing on these was an iron style, which was used to make an engraving on the material, and the writing was then made legible by rubbing powdered charcoal into the incised lines.[43]

The art of producing the palm leaf manuscripts survives to-day in Bali, where the "Indianized" culture has never been fully submerged by the tide of Islam. The methods used to produce the palm leaf manuscripts are those which have been practised since early times.[44] Balinese manuscripts are called *lontars*, after the name of the plant from which they are made. Each blade or leaf, which constitutes a "page" of the manuscript, may vary from a few inches to two feet in length and is between one inch and one-and-a-half inches wide.[45] The writing is incised on the leaf with a stylus or knife, and made legible by filling the incisions with powdered charcoal. There may be any number of pages in a lontar. These are preserved by being placed between two boards, and securely held in position "by a cord which passes through a central hole or two end holes in the leaves."[46]

The palm leaf was not the only vegetable material used for writing. Tree bark and bamboo were also used. The tree bark or bamboo was cut into strips, which were then welded by beating them together—a process reminiscent of the preparation of the Egyptian papyrus. The resultant sheet of writing material was then folded like an accordian and bound between wooden covers with a string of woven rushes.[47] A brilliant ink was used for writing.[48] David Diringer seems to think that books produced in this manner were restricted to Sumatra.[49]

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[40] Groeneveldt, p. 254.

[41] David Diringer, *The Hand-Produced Book* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), pp. 358–59.

[42] L. Caroline Plank, "Materials and Instruments of Writing in South-East Asia," *MLJ*, 1(2):8, January, 1961.

[43] Quoted in Sir Frank Swettenham, *British Malaya: An Account of the Origin and Progress of British Influence in Malaya* (London: The Bodley Head, 1907), p. 164.

[44] Plumbe, *MLJ*, 2(1):46, October, 1961.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] Diringer, *The Hand-Produced Book*, p. 379.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*

However, the Javanese are known to have employed a somewhat similar method to prepare tree bark for use as writing material. The bark of the plant known as *gluga* (*Brouponotia papyrifera*) was first cut into strips, and then macerated and beaten. After being thus treated, strips of the bark were joined to each other over a smooth surface, and defects made good by patching. The fabric thus obtained was of a brownish-grey colour, unequal in its texture, but rigid and strong.[50] The Chinese have provided us with a description of a Javanese "book" made of this material. The *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, written in 1451, describes the "book", and at the same time gives us a picture of one of the ancestors of the modern story-teller who was such a familiar sight in Malaya during the first half of the twentieth century:

> There is a sort of men who paint, on paper, men, birds, animals, insects and so on; the paper is like a scroll, and is fixed between two wooden rollers three feet high; at one side these rollers are level with the paper, whilst they protrude at the other side. The man squats down on the ground and places the picture before him, unrolling one part after the other, and turning it towards the spectators, whilst in the native languages and in a loud voice he gives an explanation of every part; the spectators sit around him and listen, laughing or crying, according to what he tells them.[51]

The *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan* makes it clear that the Javanese "paper" was an indigenous invention and was not similar to the paper invented by the Chinese. That the "book" should have consisted of a series of painted pictures instead of writing is to be expected in a community which was largely illiterate. It is likely that there were more "painted" books than written ones.

The *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan* also indicates that the books produced by the inhabitants of Malaya were similar to those of the Javanese.[52] This is hardly surprising when we consider the close political and cultural ties which had existed between Malaya and Java in the past.

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Although it is true that paper did not become generally available until after the coming of Europeans in the sixteenth century, we can discount the theory that the West first introduced paper to the peoples of South-East Asia. There is evidence to show that paper was in use some time before the coming of the West. Indeed, Chinese paper money appears to have been circulating in the Malacca Sultanate during the fifteenth century. If the Chinese chronicles are to be believed, the Malacca Sultans, who had tributary relations with China, sometimes received gifts of paper money from the Chinese.[53]

Crawford believes that paper was first imported to South-East Asia by the Arabs. He bases his argument on the fact that the Malay words for paper, pen and ink are Arabic words, being *kertas*, *kalam* and *dawat*, respectively.[54]

[50] Swettenham, p. 164.
[51] Groeneveldt, p. 178.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 244.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 249.
[54] Swettenham, p. 165.

However, we must bear in mind that the Arabs did not learn about the manufacture of paper from the Chinese until about the eighth century A.D. On the other hand, the Malaysian people had commercial, cultural and political contacts with the Chinese from at least the beginning of the Christian era, and were aware of the existence of paper from about the seventh century onwards. Mention has been made of the seventh century Buddhist pilgrim I-tsing, who spent some four years at Sri Vijaya translating the Sanskrit texts into Chinese. It is known that I-tsing used paper for his transcriptions.[55]

But although the Malaysians were aware of the existence of paper, we have no evidence to indicate that they ever imported paper from China for use as a writing material. One thing is certain. The indigenous peoples of South-East Asia never learnt about the secrets of paper-manufacture from the Chinese, and the closest they ever approached to paper was in the form made from tree bark.

At this present stage of our historical knowledge, no conclusive statement can be made, except that the Chinese were probably the first to introduce paper to the peoples of South-East Asia, but that paper, as we know it today, was not used to any great extent until the advent of the West.

D. *Conclusion*

It has been shown that even before the coming of the West, books and libraries were not unknown to Malaya and to the rest of South-East Asia. The size and importance of these libraries should not be exaggerated. Most of the collections, with the possible exception of those at Sri Vijaya, were extremely small, and were intended to facilitate the study of the particular religion that happened to prevail at a particular period, or were merely state archives.

Books were highly prized possessions, no doubt because of their scarcity and largely religious content. In the main, books and libraries did not play an important part in the lives of the masses, the majority of whom were illiterate. To these people, the most important person was the professional storyteller, who could graphically unfold before their eyes the tales and legends of the ancient past.

Neither the Portugese who captured Malacca in 1511, nor the Dutch who wrested it from them in 1641, appear to have established any libraries of importance in Malaya. This is to be expected, since Portugese and Dutch influence on the Malay Peninsula hardly ever extended beyond Malacca, and both powers were only interested in Malacca because of its geographical position on the Straits of Malacca which enabled it to dominate the East–West trade routes, and made it the important emporium for the trade of the Malay archipelago.

The history of libraries in Malaya and Singapore is thus largely a history of the libraries which were established during the period of British rule and since then.

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[55] Vlekke, p. 27–28.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF DEVELOPMENTS IN LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANSHIP IN MALAYA, 1817–1961

A. *Historical and Introductory*

The British first secured a foothold on the Malay Peninsula in 1786 when they acquired the island of Penang from the Sultan of Kedah. This was followed by the acquisition of Singapore in 1819 and of Malacca in 1824. In 1826, the three British settlements of Penang, Singapore and Malacca were incorporated as the Straits Settlements. Until 1867, the Straits Settlements were ruled by the East India Company from India and administered by officers of the Indian Civil Service. After this date, however, largely as a result of local agitation, the administration was transferred from the control of India to the direct rule of the Colonial Office in England. From 1873 onwards, a more aggressive forward policy was begun by Sir Andrew Clarke, the Governor of the Straits Settlements, and this policy eventually led to the establishment of British political influence over the whole of the Malay Peninsula.

Malaya on the eve of the Second World war was divided into three administrative units according to the degree and extent of British political power. These were:

(*a*) The Straits Settlements, which comprised Singapore, Penang and Malacca and constituted a Crown Colony under a Governor.

(*b*) The Federated Malay States, comprising the states of Selangor, Negri Sembilan, Perak and Pahang, which had been formed into a Federation in 1895. The F.M.S. were theoretically self-governing units; they were not colonies, but were protectorates, which had treaty relations with the British. British protection in practice was administered through the Governor of the Straits Settlements in his other capacity of High Commissioner for the Malay States, and through the separate British Residents or Advisers who were attached to each state.

(*c*) The Unfederated Malay States, comprising Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu and Johore, were constitutionally and administratively more independent than the F.M.S. They had agreed separately to be guided by British Advisers but were not prepared to enter into a formal association.

At the end of the Second World War, the British attempted to unite the Malay States and the settlements of Penang and Malacca into a Malayan Union under a Governor and a strong Central Government, thus depriving the rulers of the Malay states of all but nominal authority. When a storm of protest arose over this move, a more acceptable scheme was introduced in 1948, uniting the nine Malay states into a Federation. Penang and Malacca were within the Federal framework, but remained colonies of the British. Singapore continued as a separate colony under its own Governor. This state of affairs ended when Malaya achieved her independence in 1957, and Penang and Malacca were ceded to the newly independent Federation of Malaya. Singapore received full internal self-government in 1959.

The historical background is an essential introduction to the history of libraries in both Malaya and Singapore. To some extent, it helps to explain why libraries are most developed in the former British settlements of Singapore, Penang and Malacca, where British political power was absolute,and least developed in the Unfederated Malay States, where British power was least. The library situation in Malaya was a map of the varying shades of British political power in the Malay Peninsula.

It would be convenient to divide the history of libraries and librarianship in Malaya into two major periods: (*a*) The period from 1817–1945; and (*b*) the period since World War II.

B. *Developments from 1817 to 1945*

Very few libraries of any importance were founded in the pre-World War II period. Library development during this period was both haphazard and uncoordinated. Libraries were founded as the need arose, mainly through private initiative. As in the field of education, the Government tended to remain aloof, although in several instances it provided small grants to a number of subscription libraries. Most of the libraries established during this period catered only for those literate in English, which in effect meant the European community. This is hardly surprising since the libraries were founded by Englishmen for Englishmen.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY (1817–1900)

From the point of view of library history in Malaya, the nineteenth century is important because it witnessed the birth of three libraries—the Penang Library, the Malacca Library and the Kuala Lumpur Book Club—which still survive to-day.

The first library to be established in Malaya under the British was a small subscription library in Penang in 1817.[1] As British political influence extended similar kinds of libraries were established in Malacca in 1881[2] and in Kuala Lumpur "at the turn of the century."[3]

Very little is known about the early history of these libraries partly because no records were kept during their early years, and partly because of the destruction of their records through negligence, by various insects, and during the holocaust of the Japanese invasion and occupation. However, enough information has filtered down the corridors of time for us to make some generalizations regarding their early history and character.

The three libraries were all subscription libraries, charging an entrance fee and a monthly subscription. They were formed as independent societies and were managed by a Committee elected annually at the Annual General

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[1] A. Wright and H.A. Cartwright (*eds.*), *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya* (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Co., 1908), p. 744.

[2] Kutub Khanah Melaka, *Laporan Tahunan 1960*, p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

[3] D. Nixon and G. Hawkins, "Kuala Lumpur Book Club," *Malaya*, March, 1953, p. 158.

Meeting of members. The Secretary of the Committee also served in an honorary capacity as "librarian", but he was usually assisted by a paid library clerk who was responsible for maintaining all routine records. The exception was the Kuala Lumpur Book Club, which in 1922 had a paid part-time Secretary and Librarian.[4]

Apparently all the service that was required of the libraries was that they maintained a collection of books, which reflected current tastes, and which was preferably organized in some systematic order, but not essentially so. All library routines were cut down to a minimum. Books were purchased by the simple method of placing a standing order with London agents to send all new books published in Britain by certain authors and/or falling within certain categories. Normally the agents were not permitted to spend above a specified sum of money.

Membership of the libraries tended to be exclusive in the early years. Not any Tom, Dick or Harry was allowed to join as a member, even if he was willing to pay the required entrance fee and monthly subscriptions. For example, in the case of the Penang Library, his acceptance as a member was conditional upon his obtaining a two-thirds majority in a ballot by members.[5] There is some evidence to indicate that these strict admission rules were relaxed during the first decades of the twentieth century, largely in order to attract a greater membership and so obtain more funds.

The financial position of the three libraries was never really sound, largely because their strength depended on the size of their membership which, unfortunately, was never really very large. Another factor which tended to weaken the already meagre finances of the libraries was the high cost of importing books from Britain, especially in the days before the invention of the steamship and the opening of the Suez Canal. As early as 1880, the Penang Library was in such sore financial straits that it had to approach the Straits Settlements Government for aid.[6]

The principle of government support for libraries had been recognized as early as 1874, when the Government had taken over the Singapore Library and converted it into the Raffles Library and Museum.[7] However, the Straits Government was not very anxious to bear the cost of maintaining another library. Nevertheless, it was willing to provide the institution with an annual grant of $1,500 while allowing the members of the library to retain control of its assets. There were two conditions attached to the government grant: firstly, that two officers of the Government should be members of the Committee of Management, thus ensuring some measure of governmental control; and secondly, that a reading room should be open free to the general public.[8] Borrowing rights continued to be granted only to subscribers. But compared to the days when the public were not even admitted to the premises of the Penang Library, the opening of a free reading room was some advance, however slight, towards the concept of a free public library service.

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[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Penang Library, *Annual Report 1945*, p. 2.

[6] Wright and Cartwright, p. 744.

[7] R. Hanitsch, "Raffles Library and Museum, Singapore," *One Hundred Years of Singapore...* ed. W. Makepeace, G.E. Brooke and Roland St. J. Braddell (London: Murray, 1921), I, p. 546.

[8] Wright and Cartwright, p. 744.

The Government grant undoubtedly led to greater democratization of the Penang Library, which had hitherto been reserved exclusively for the use of members. It also set a precedent for future aid to other libraries in Malaya. Both the Malacca Library and the Kuala Lumpur Book Club received small annual government grants in return for allowing members of the public free access to their reading rooms. But whereas the Malacca Library like the Penang Library had to allow government nominees to sit on its Committee of Management, the Kuala Lumpur Book Club managed to avoid this condition and thus retain its complete independence.[9]

Not enough information exists for us to make a detailed analysis of the bookstock of these nineteenth century libraries. However, from what we know of the collection of another contemporary library, the Raffles Library in Singapore, and from our knowledge of their book collections to-day, we can be quite certain that the collections consisted predominantly of fiction, with fairly large proportions of travel, history and biography.[10]

Because the libraries were founded to cater specifically for the reading needs of the European community, there was a heavy emphasis on the recreational type of reading material. The Kuala Lumpur Book Club carried this emphasis to an extreme, and for many years the library "made it a point of honour not to possess the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' because that was a reference book and the Club wanted books for comfortable reading."[11]

The blatant commercialism of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club was possible because it was completely free from governmental control. The Penang and Malacca libraries, however, made some genuine attempts to avoid degenerating into mere commercial rental libraries. One of the declared purposes of the Penang Library was the formation of "a collection of Malayan and Eastern manuscripts as well as specimens of art and nature from various countries around."[12] Lack of funds made it difficult to carry out this aim, and whenever a choice had to be made between a fiction purchase and a non-fiction one, the decision was almost invariably made in favour of the former.

To a large extent the book collections reflected contemporary reading tastes, since the libraries were essentially "members' libraries." If the book issues of the Raffles Library are any guide to the type of books issued by the libraries in Malaya, fiction constituted the major fare of the members.[13]

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[9] Nixon and Hawkins, *Malaya*, March, 1953, p. 158.

[10] According to the *Annual Report* of the Raffles Library for 1893, of the 18,000 books in the library, works of fiction formed one-third and works of history, biography and travel another third.

[11] D. Nixon and G. Hawkins, "Kuala Lumpur Book Club—A Pioneer," *MLJ*, 1(4): 13, July, 1961.

[12] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1945*, p. 2.

[13] The *Annual Report* of the Raffles Library, 1895, states that 82% of all books borrowed belonged to the fiction class; the remaining consisted of 5½% travels, 3½% history, 3% biography and 6% miscellany.

According to Walter Buchler, a Malayan Civil Servant, the reading tastes of the European community in Malaya and Singapore in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not differ very much from those in Britain.

> The percentage of fiction read by them is on a par with libraries at home. The women are also great readers, even more so than the men, as they have more time on their hands. Much more is read upcountry on the Rubber Estates than in the towns, as there they have not as many social distractions. The popular books of Great Britain are just as popular in Malaya, and it is quite impossible to differentiate between any author, as whatever goes in the homeland goes here.[14]

To what extent these early libraries can be considered "public" is a debatable question. They were certainly not the modern concept of the free public library provided for by legislation and financed by public funds. It is true that they received some limited financial support from the government, admitted the public to their reading rooms and permitted the use of their resources on the premises to non-subscribers. But they were not popular libraries since they were used almost exclusively by Europeans. The high subscription rates, the strict admission rules, and the fact that very few non-Europeans were literate in English were contributory factors.

THE PERIOD FROM 1900 TO 1941

The first two decades of the twentieth century witnessed the rapid economic development of Malaya caused by increasing world demand for rubber. This new wealth probably enabled the government to participate increasingly in the fields of education, public health, and agricultural research, which had hitherto been left largely to private enterprise. Thus during this period the seeds for many of Malaya's special libraries, such as those of the Medical Research Institute, the Rubber Research Institute and the Department of Agriculture, were planted. We will deal with these in greater detail in a later chapter.

In the "public" library field, this period saw increasing use of existing subscription libraries by the local inhabitants as more and more of them became literate in English. The lowering of subscription rates and the abolition of the strict admission rules also helped to attract a larger Asian membership. Apart from the Ipoh Library founded in 1931, no library of comparable importance to the three nineteenth century libraries appears to have been established during this period. But a number of commercial rental libraries run by individuals or bookshops were set up in towns where no libraries existed.

This period was also characterized by the first tentative attempts to establish vernacular libraries for the local inhabitants. In the period after the 1914–1918 war, some Asians who had received an English education began to become members of the various subscription libraries established by the Europeans. But in the main the bulk of the population could not make use of the library facilities, either because they could not afford to do so, or were totally illiterate, or were not literate in English.

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[14] Walter Buchler, "The Malayan Reading Public," *British Malaya*, 7:90, August 1932.

For those shut out from the subscription libraries because they were not literate in English, the answer was the establishment of vernacular libraries. Of all the races in Malaya, the Chinese were the most active in providing reading facilities for themselves. The Chinese are traditionally a self-reliant community, and, as in the field of education, they did not wait for the government to take the necessary steps to fulfil their library needs, but provided these for themselves when the need arose.

We do not know the exact date when they began organizing libraries for themselves. But we know that by the 1930's a number of reading rooms existed in all the major towns of Malaya. These reading rooms which were very well patronised were organized by Chinese school teachers, run by regular contributions from the Chinese community, and were open free to all.[15] They were stocked mainly with Chinese books and periodicals, and had the dual purpose of maintaining their members' interest in things Chinese, and of keeping young people from going astray.[16] One is inclined to suspect that they were also intended to keep the nationalism of the Chinese oriented towards China. Most of these reading rooms appear to have been destroyed or abandoned during the Japanese invasion, and it was left to the Malayan Public Library Association in the post-war period to begin all over again.

Apparently, the English-educated Chinese also provided themselves with reading material in English. In 1904 Dr. R. Hanitsch, then Director of the Raffles Library and Museum, reported that the small number of Chinese subscribers among the membership of the Raffles Library was due to the fact that there were several libraries run by the Chinese which provided books in English.[17] There were such libraries not only in Singapore, but in all the major towns of Malaya. According to Buchler, these libraries were stocked with books of a fairly high standard and contained many "classical novels."[18] Most of these libraries, however, were attached to social clubs and are of little significance to the history of libraries in Malaya. Nevertheless, they did fulfil a need in an age when libraries were scarce.

No history of libraries in Malaya would be complete without a brief note on the numerous itinerant "libraries" which flourished during this period. These "libraries", if they can be so-called, were run mainly by Chinese bookstores, and catered largely for children. They resemble the various newspaper vendor stands that are found on the street corners of major Western cities, such as London and Sydney, except that their collections were meant to be rented out rather than sold, although the latter step was not unknown. The stock in trade of a typical wandering Chinese "librarian" was a few stools, and a bookshelf on which his entire collection was displayed usually at a prominent street corner. The collection consisted largely of comic books tell-ing stories from famous Chinese classics and legends as well as stories with more modern settings. These were lent out at very low rates if read on the spot, and at higher rates if the reader wanted to borrow the book for home reading.

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[15] Buchler, *British Malaya*, 7:89, August 1932.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1904*.

[18] Buchler, *British Malaya*, 7:89, August 1932.

These libraries were very numerous in the pre-war era both in Malaya and Singapore. No one is sure when they were first brought over to Malaya from China. They began to appear in numbers after World War I. Some of these itinerant libraries still exist to-day, but their heyday was before World War II. They are a rarity to-day because their potential readers have become more sophisticated and educated.[19]

As far as is known no attempt was made by the Indian community to organize libraries for themselves on a large scale. Of all the races residing in Malaya, they had the highest percentage of literacy in English and consequently were able to take advantage of existing reading facilities provided by the subscription libraries.

The Malays too were not involved in the promotion of libraries, probably because of the lack of an extensive published literature and the low rate of literacy. But there was an attempt by an enlightened civil servant, O.T. Dussek, to provide lending libraries for Malays in the third decade of the twentieth century.

Dussek, like many Englishmen who served in Malaya, was deeply interested in Malay welfare and education. He joined the Federated Malay States Education Service in 1912, and became the first principal of the Sultan Idris Training College for teachers, when it opened at Tanjong Malim in 1922. In 1924, he was appointed Assistant Director of Education in charge of Malay education. From the beginning, Dussek was concerned about the lack of books in Malay, and one of his first acts was to establish a Malay Translation Bureau centred around the Sultan Idris Training College to translate standard English school books and books for general reading into Malay.[20] He also intended to start a travelling book-shop and libraries for the Malay public as soon as enough material had been translated.[21] Dussek appears to have been a man of far-reaching vision, for in order to promote greater usage of the Malay language, he suggested that the British government should adopt Malay as the official language and establish a Malay university. In this respect, he was rather too advanced for his age, and his radical ideas got him into trouble with some of his European colleagues.[22]

He had intended to start a travelling library in 1936. That he was quite undaunted by official opposition is apparent from his statement that "I would have done this on my own even if I had to use my own car."[23] But he never had a chance to put his idea of a travelling library into practice, for while on leave in England, he resigned from his post. The reasons for Dussek's resignation are not clear, but one of them may have been due to "the frustration I experienced...in my work for Malay education."[24]

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[19] Information about these itinerant "libraries" was supplied by Mr. Wang Fo Wen, a well-known Chinese scholar in Malaya.

[20] O.T. Dussek, *Letter to W.J. Plumbe*, 17th October, 1960.

[21] O.T. Dussek, *Letter to Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad*, 13th July, 1960.

[22] O.T. Dussek, *Letter to Abdullah Sanusi Ahmad*, 29th August, 1960.

[23] Dussek, *Letter to Plumbe*.

There is no doubt that if Dussek had been allowed to put his ideas into practice, the Malay language would be far more developed than it is to-day, and the provision of Malay books for public libraries would not be such a problem. The existence of libraries would also have contributed greatly to the education of the Malays, who had slipped behind the other races in this field. Furthermore, the importance of libraries would have been brought home to the Malay community. One of the chief reasons for the slow development of libraries since Malaya's achievement of independence is the lack of pressure from the Malay community on the government to establish them. It is this pressure alone which in the long run will have any important influence on library development in Malaya.

THE JAPANESE OCCUPATION, 1942–45

The Japanese invasion and occupation of Malaya from 1942 to 1945 proved quite disastrous to the few libraries that had been established in Malaya. All the libraries suffered heavy losses from bombing and looting. Some were destroyed. The Japanese authorities did not seem particularly interested in preserving what few books that were left after they had obtained complete control of Malaya. Indeed it has been recorded that some Japanese soldiers used the books of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club to build fires for cooking.[25]

CONCLUSION

On the whole it can be said that there were no major developments in the history of libraries and librarianship during the period 1817–1945. Such libraries as were founded during this period were intended to provide material for recreational reading. The importance of libraries in the fields of education and research was yet to be fully realized; the concept of librarianship as a profession was yet unknown; and the idea of a well-organized free public library service was still incomprehensible to the majority of the people.

C. *Developments from 1945 to 1962*

The library situation in Malaya at the end of the War was anything but satisfactory. There were a few research libraries, such as those of the Rubber Research Institute, the Forest Research Institute, the Medical Research Institute and the Department of Agriculture, serving a small and restricted clientele. There were small "public" libraries in most of the major towns of Malaya, partially supported by small government grants but financed mainly from membership subscriptions. There were a number of small libraries attached to social clubs, and a few rental libraries run on a commercial basis. All the libraries, however, had only a limited membership. Moreover, they

[24] Dussek, *Letter to Sanusi*, 13th, July, 1960.
[25] Nixon and Hawkins, *MLJ*, 1(4): 15, July 1961.

only existed in urban areas, and had small book stocks which were largely in a dilapidated condition and mainly in English. To make matters worse, there was not a single trained librarian in the whole country, and no facilities existed for the training of local librarians. Poor service was the inevitable result.

The situation improved slightly with the passage of time, and by 1962 existing collections had been strengthened. There were a few free public libraries, libraries in towns as well as rural areas, some trained librarians and a considerable number in training, and an active professional association working to improve the quality of existing library services, and to secure the establishment of a free public library service on a national scale. There was an increasing awareness of the need for public libraries, as necessary adjuncts of the economic development programmes of the Government. State Governments and Town Councils were beginning to accept the responsibility for establishing and supporting libraries as were evident by the takeover of the Perak Library, hitherto a subscription library, by the Ipoh Town Council and its re-organization as the Ipoh Library, a free public library; by the interest of the Penang Town Council in running the Penang Library as a free public library; by the provision of a mobile library service by the Malacca State Government as part of its rural development programme; and by the many other instances of increased financial support for various "public" libraries by States and Town Councils. At the national level, the Federal government had pledged itself to establish a national library, which it was hoped, would eventually form the pivot of a national library system.

Much of the improvement in the library situation was due to the efforts of the following bodies: (1) The Sir Henry Gurney Memorial Fund; (2) the British Council; (3) the United States Information Service; (4) the Asia Foundation; (5) the Malayan Public Library Association; and (6) the Malayan Library Group and its child the Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (Library Association of the Federation of Malaya), now called the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (Library Association of Malaysia).

THE SIR HENRY GURNEY MEMORIAL FUND

Ironically, the emergency which hindered the development of libraries in Malaya was indirectly responsible for the establishment of a number of small "public" libraries, opened from funds collected to build memorials to Sir Henry Gurney, the High Commissioner who was killed by Communist terrorists in an ambush in 1951.

The Fund was used to establish a number of new libraries, including the Gurney Memorial Library at Seremban, which was built at a cost of \$19,605;[26] the Segamat Public Library, Johore; the Sir Henry Gurney Library, Rembau, in Negri Sembilan, which is a free library; and the Klang Gurney Memorial Library. Other libraries have benefitted from the Gurney

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[26] L.M. Harrod, "Libraries in Malaya and Singapore," *LAR*, 58:332, September 1956.

Memorial Fund, including the Malacca Library, the British Council Library in Kuala Lumpur, and the Ipoh Library.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council is a non-governmental body, formally established by Royal Charter in 1940 with the expressed purpose of "making known in other countries British cultural and intellectual achievements and activities; in other words, music, art, drama, literature, librarianship, science, medicine, education and similar aspects of the British way of life."[27]

The British Council established an office in Malaya immediately after the Second World War. Among its more important activities has been the encouragement of library development in Malaya. Its policy towards libraries in Malaya was determined to a large extent by a survey of existing library facilities in the country carried out by its Chief Regional Library Adviser, Miss Kate D. Ferguson, in 1950.[28]

Miss Ferguson's survey revealed that although literacy, and particularly literacy in English was increasing rapidly, and although, contrary to some opinion, there was a growing reading public in Malaya, there was no planned library service for the adult population. In most towns and districts there were subscription libraries, or small collections attached to social clubs and Old Pupils' Societies, but most of these were small, lacked trained librarians, were inadequately financed, and had poor and badly organized collections.

Her survey also showed that most schools had good book collections or were in the process of building up collections, although their effectiveness was hampered by lack of space and trained teacher-librarians. She was, however, particularly disturbed by the fact that school children, who were beginning to make good use of their school libraries, should be turned out into "bookless communities", where no facilities existed for borrowing or even buying reading material.[29] In such circumstances there was always the danger of these young and impressionable minds absorbing "undesirable ideologies."[30]

She concluded her survey with the warning that

> In this attempt to prepare a Nation for self-government and in the attempt to inculcate good democratic ideals in the Youth of Malaya, it is imperative that library facilities be provided for them immediately. If a four or five year gap is allowed we may find that too great a number of the young men and women have taken the wrong turning.[31]

In the last part of her survey, Miss Ferguson set out what she considered would be a well-planned library service.[32] Among the recommendations which she put forward were that (1) a qualified librarian should be appointed to plan the library service; (2) a Central Library should be set up to house a reference and lending library, to act as an advisory bureau on all library matters, and to be a training centre for future librarians; (3) a book box scheme should be inaugurated as a part of the services of the Central Library to supplement the book collections of existing libraries in towns and districts where necessary; (4) a scheme for the training of future librarians should be undertaken; and (5) a municipal library with outlying branches should be opened in Kuala Lumpur. As it was unlikely that the Federation of Malaya would have the funds available for such a project in view of the Emergency, Miss Ferguson suggested that aid should be sought from either the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund or UNESCO.

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[27] G.A. Glaister, "A British Council Librarian Abroad," *LAR*, 54:329, October 1952.

[28] K.D. Ferguson, *A Survey to Ascertain the Existing Available Reading Material in the Federation of Malaya and the Present Provision of Books and Other Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: British Council, 1st May, 1950). (Typewritten).

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 1. [30] *Ibid.*, p. 21. [31] *Ibid.*, p. 30 [32] *Ibid.*, pp. 26–30.

Miss Ferguson's scheme was neither over-ambitious nor impracticable, and was in fact a temporary compromise between what was desirable and what was feasible. The British Council authorities noted her recommendations, and in the public library which they later developed in Kuala Lumpur, we may find many of the functions which Miss Ferguson had envisaged for the Central Library and for the municipal library in Kuala Lumpur.[33]

The British Council has not been content merely to establish what is probably one of Malaya's earliest free public libraries; it has worked actively to eliminate deficiencies in the existing provision of library facilities. It is always ready to help start new library services, or strengthen existing ones by providing gifts of books, periodicals and library equipment. Almost all the major libraries in Malaya, including the University of Malaya Library, have benefitted from British Council help and gifts. The Council has a Library Adviser, who is prepared to give advice and library training to the various unqualified but enthusiastic men and women who manage the majority of Malaya's libraries. It has provided a scholarship to a Malayan to study librarianship in England, and it takes an active interest in the work of the local library association.

THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICES

The United States actively entered the field of overseas information following World War II. The overseas information programme had been conducted on a relatively modest scale until the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 (Public Law 402, 80th Congress) assigned permanent legislative authority for the information programme to the Department of State, to be conducted with this objective:

> To promote better understanding of the United States in other countries and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.[34]

On August 1, 1953, by Executive Order, all overseas informational activities were separated from the Department of State and consolidated in the United States Information Agency, whose basic mission, President Eisenhower declared, is "to submit evidence to peoples of other nations by means of communication techniques that the objectives and policies of the United States are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress and peace."[35]

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[33] See Chapter III for description of British Council Library.

[34] Peter S. Jennison, "How American Books Reach Readers Abroad," *LT*, 5:9, July 1956.

To achieve this objective, the United States Information Agency has been delegated the tasks of

(1) explaining and interpreting to foreign peoples the objectives and policies of the United States Government;
(2) depicting imaginatively the correlation between U.S. policies and the legitimate aspirations of other peoples of the world;
(3) unmasking and countering hostile attempts to distort or to frustrate the objectives and policies of the United States;
(4) delineating those important aspects of the life and culture of the people of the United States which facilitate understanding of the policies and objectives of the government of the United States.[36]

The overseas book and library programmes, as distinct from the press, film and radio divisions and programmes, are probably the best known and appreciated of all USIA activities and are operated by the Information Center Service of the USIA, which since 1953 has established more than 164 libraries and reading rooms in 90 countries.[37]

The programmes of the USIA are carried out by local bodies called USIS (United States Information Service). USIS first established a library in Kuala Lumpur in Feb., 1950. Similar libraries were established in Singapore in May 1950, and in Penang in 1952. The libraries, established at a time when the Communist rebellion was at its height, was welcomed by the British as an effective means of combating communism along the ideological front, which the British had sadly neglected. As the war against the Communist progressed it became obvious that victory over the Communists was to be won not only in the dense tropical jungle, but also on the battlefields of the mind.

That the USIS libraries play an important propaganda role in the American "cold-war" efforts, there can be no doubt. Their importance in Malaya has been to introduce the people to the idea of a free library service, a concept which even now is not altogether clearly understood. How novel the idea of a free library service was in Malaya can be gauged by the following question asked by a puzzled Chinese schoolboy of the librarian, shortly after the first USIS library opened in Kuala Lumpur: "How does your government know that we shall return these books that we pay nothing for?"[38]

Like the British Council, USIS has helped to put new libraries on their feet by providing a large part of the initial bookstock. It has also made several important gifts of books and library equipment to the various libraries of Malaya. The extent of aid which USIS has provided for libraries in Malaya will be made clear in later chapters.

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[35] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[36] U.S. Information Agency. *First Review of Operations, August–December, 1953* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1954).

[37] Edward R. Murrow, "Our Overseas Libraries; a Look at the Future," *WLB*, 36:43–44+ September 1961.

[38] M.L. Nichols, "Malaya's First Free Public Library," *LLAB*, 14(1):16, Winter 1951.

THE ASIA FOUNDATION

Unlike USIS and the British Council, the Asia Foundation has not established any libraries in Malaya, but it has done a lot to stimulate library development by giving books and library aid to the indigenous organizations directly concerned with the use of books and to functioning libraries.[39]

The Asia Foundation, a non-profit, non-political organization, was incorporated in 1951 by private American citizens in California to support activities in Asia,

> usually developed and administered by Asian organizations and institutions, in such fields as education and research, science and technology, legal studies, community development, labor education and welfare, cultural activities, and international conferences.[40]

As the Foundation is interested in furthering civic, organizational and professional standards in Asia, it is concerned in part with the state of library services there. In Malaya, it has undertaken numerous activities which have led to the development and improvement of library facilities.

More specifically, it has been the main prop of the Malayan Public Library Association, founded in 1955 to set up libraries in the new villages of the Federation. Since its inception the Association has established more than 150 Chinese and 80 Malay libraries[41] and at its peak reached more than 100,000 people in Malaya and Singapore "through community activities, education and recreational projects which run the gamut of music clubs, sports, libraries, publications, lectures, adult education, dramatic troupes, and scholarship projects."[42] More details about this Association will be provided below.

The Foundation has also helped to improve existing libraries through gifts of books and money. Among its beneficiaries have been the libraries of the universities in Singapore and Malaya. The Foundation has provided assistance to the University of Singapore library for the cataloguing of the books in its Chinese library, which is the largest in South-East Asia.[43] It has made available funds to the Library of the University of Malaya (Kuala Lumpur) for the purchase of microfilm and microfiche copies of Malay manuscripts in the libraries of Europe, as well as of research material on American history; and has presented many hundreds of books and several valuable retrospective sets of journals to both universities.[44]

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[39] C. Lowenberg, "Book and Library Aid in Asia," *WLB*, 35:453, February, 1961.

[40] Asia Society, *American Institutions and Organisations Interested in Asia: A Reference Directory* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1961), p. 61.

[41] "Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu," *MLJ*, 1(1):23, October 1960.

[42] J.M. Heyman, "Asia Foundation Libraries," *LJ*, 82:2890, November 1957.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] "Books & Microfilms Worth $100,000 given to University Library," *MLJ*, 2(1):66, October 1961.

Some time before 1960, the Asia Foundation provided a mobile library which was used by the Adult Education Association of the Federation of Malaya in connection with its work with neoliterates. For a time the library was moved around the *kampongs* (villages) wherever the Adult Education Association found that it could be useful. However, since the Adult Education Association was absorbed into the Ministry for Rural Development, use of the mobile library has been discontinued and the books which accompanied it have been dispersed.

Another important activity of the Asia Foundation has been concerned with the training of librarians. It has provided study and travel grants to various librarians in Malaya to enable them "to become acquainted with the philosophy, techniques, and administration of library services in other countries."[45] It has also indicated its willingness to help Malaya establish a School of Librarianship attached to the University of Malaya.

Interest in the improvement of professional standards of librarians has led the Foundation to support the various activities of the P.P.P.T.M.

The help provided by the Asia Foundation has undoubtedly done much to improve the standard of library service and stimulate library development in Malaya.

THE MALAYAN PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Malayan Public Library Association (M.P.L.A.), unlike the P.P.P.T.M., was not a professional library association. It was in fact a non-profit making limited liability company founded with the main object of promoting "culture and education...by the establishment of public libraries in the villages and towns of Malaya and other means."[46] It played a major part in establishing libraries and adult education classes throughout Malaya. Officially the M.P.L.A. was founded in 1955, but it began its work at the beginning of 1953.

The M.P.L.A., was to some extent a child of the Emergency. At the height of the Communist rebellion, when the British authorities found that the squatter population scattered on the fringes of towns and estates and dispersed in the jungle were proving easy targets as well as sources of support for the Communist terrorists, they decided to bring them together in nucleated sites, where they could be more easily defended as well as supervised and prevented from aiding the Communists. Altogether about a million people, mainly Chinese, were resettled in new villages and towns and protected behind barbed wire fencing.

Early in 1953, Mr. Wen Tien Kuang, then Secretary of the Social Benevolent and Cultural Sub-Committee of the Malayan Chinese Association, a political party, sought help from Mr. Robert Sheeks of the Committee for Free Asia to establish libraries in these new villages. Mr. Wen was firmly convinced that

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[45] Heyman, p. 2890.

[46] *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Malayan Public Library Association* (Kuala Lumpur, 1955), p. 1.

The library project could help to raise the social, educational and cultural standards of the villagers, and if handled carefully could even contribute towards the ideological war against Communism.[47]

By a strange coincidence, Mr. Sheeks had also the same idea in mind and had begun to make enquiries about the feasibility of such a project. Mr. Sheeks was particularly interested in the important contribution that the libraries would make in the war against Communism. On his initiative an Advisory Committee was formed to make recommendations.[48]

After much deliberation the Committee decided that as an initial step five experimental libraries should be set up in the new villages near Kuala Lumpur, each library to consist of a basic unit of 500 books and 23 magazines. If these pilot libraries proved to be a success, a Malayan Public Library Association would be incorporated to set up more libraries throughout the Federation. The libraries would be run on the principle of self-help. That is to say, each library after receiving an initial stock of books and magazines from the parent association would be maintained by local contributions and/or membership subscriptions, and managed by local library committees under the general supervision of the M.P.L.A. It was also planned that eventually well-stocked Central Libraries located in urban areas would be established from whose resources the smaller village libraries could draw.[49]

As planned five libraries were opened between March and April 1953 in the following villages near Kuala Lumpur:

Jinjang (two libraries) : population, 12,000
Serdang : population, 10,000
Sungei Way : population, 3,500
Semenyih : population, 6,000

Reporting on the pilot library project in June 1954, Mr. Wen stated that the libraries were receiving widespread support from local community leaders, school teachers, headmasters and government officials. They were each charging an entrance fee of $1 for adults and 50 cents for students, and a monthly subscription of 40 cents for adults and 20 cents for students. In certain individual cases, the local library committee allowed a reduction or exemption of fees.[50]

In view of the success of the project, he recommended that the Malayan

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[47] Wen Tien Kuang, "How and Why New Village Libraries Came into Being," *MM*, 2:6, June 1954.

[48] The Committee comprised the following:
Mr. Siew Khai Wye, Chinese Affairs Department,
Mr. Chang Yoong Hin, Department of Information,
Mr. Leung Cheung Ling, an "Educationist."
Mr. Wen Tien Kuang, Secretary of the Committee,
Mr. Tan Kian Kee, M.C.A. Cultural Section,
Mr. Robert Sheeks, Committee for Free Asia,
Mr. Robert Goffard, Committee for Free Asia.

[49] "New Village Self-Help and Cooperation Give Start to Big Library Project," *MM*, 2(4):6, February 1954.

[50] Wen Tien Kuang, *MM*, 2:6–7, June 1954.

Public Library Association should be organized immediately so that it could extend library services to other villages and small towns; and that simultaneously a Central Library should be set up in Kuala Lumpur as the nerve centre and model for all village libraries.[51]

Mr. Wen's recommendations were immediately put into effect. An initial stock of several thousand books for the Central Library was purchased from Hong Kong with the aid of grants from the Committee for Free Asia, and this was housed in two large rooms in the Chinese Assembly Hall, Kuala Lumpur, free of charge.[52] This library grew from small beginnings to about 50,000 by 1962 and for some years the M.P.L.A. functioned from there.

In March, 1955, the M.P.L.A. was officially launched, with its registration as a limited liability company. The Constitution provided for the management of the Association by a Council comprising a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and four other members, elected by members at the Annual General Meeting.[53]

The Association got off on a promising start, and by the end of 1955 had established 62 libraries[54] which had a total stock of 150,000 volumes and a total membership of 20,000.[55]

The procedure involved in starting a library was fairly simple. When a local organization, such as a youth club, village local council, school or other publicly registered cultural or educational body, agreed to run a library, the Association would send an initial stock of books and magazines to the organization concerned together with advice on how to manage the library.[56] Although the local organization was permitted to run the library in its own way, it was required to follow certain basic principles laid down by the Association; and regular inspection was made by the Association's Inspectors to ensure that these were being followed.[57]

Theoretically, after receiving an initial supply of books and magazines from the parent Association, the local library committees were expected to find their own means to provide for the housing and maintenance of the libraries, and for the purchase of additional books, which was expected to be made through the Association. They were permitted to charge subscriptions in order to raise the necessary funds, or to rely on special donations or grants from individuals and local councils.[58] In practice, few of the libraries ever succeeded in being self-sufficient and had to rely on the Association to provide new books or replace old and worn-out copies.[59] This was a heavy drain on the Association's resources and was to prove serious in later years when its sources of income dried up. In the early years, however, this did not matter very much because the Association received huge grants of money from the Asia Foundation which had replaced the Committee for Free Asia as the main support of the M.P.L.A., and the Social Welfare Lotteries Board.

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[51] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[52] "Central Chinese Library in K.L. Takes Shape," *MM*, 2(13):7, July 1954.

[53] *Memorandum and Articles of Association of the M.P.L.A.*, p. 9.

[54] Wen Tien Kuang, "The Malayan Public Library Association," *MLGN*, 1(3):55, January 1956.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

[56] Malayan Public Library Association, *Annual Report, 1956.* (Mimeographed).

[57] Wen, *MLGN*, 1(3):56, January 1956.

[58] M.P.L.A., *Annual Report, 1956.*

[59] *Ibid.*

Another difficulty encountered by the Association was in obtaining new titles of books. Very few books were and are published locally, so that the bulk of its purchases had to be made from Hong Kong. But during the Emergency, the Government would frequently ban all the publications emerging from particular Hong Kong firms, if these were suspected of having Communist sympathies. This ban was sometimes quite indiscriminate, and frequently publications which were of purely literary merit were banned just because they were published by a firm which had been guilty of publishing what the Federation Government regarded as subversive literature.

Despite such initial difficulties, the Association managed to flourish and expand. In 1956, on the eve of Malaya's achievement of independence, the M.P.L.A., which had hitherto only established libraries stocked with Chinese books, began setting up Malay libraries as well. The intention was obviously to give the Association a more "Malayan" character. Altogether 22 Malay libraries were set up in 1956.[60]

The year 1956 also saw an expansion in the scope of the Association's activities to include adult education. With the financial support and approval of the Government, the M.P.L.A., opened 400 adult classes where Chinese, Malay or English was taught at the beginning of 1956. By the end of the year almost 700 adult classes had been established.[61]

In terms of the number of libraries and adult classes, the M.P.L.A., reached its peak in 1957, as can be seen in the following tables which illustrate the growth of the Association between 1957 and 1960.

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHINESE AND MALAY LIBRARIES OF M.P.L.A., 1955–1960[a]

Year	Chinese	Malay	Total
1955	62	-	62
1956	141	22	163
1957	175	56	231
1958	156	73	229
1959	150	82	232
1960	150	80	230

[a]Source: Annual Reports of M.P.L.A., 1955–60.

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[60] *Ibid.*
[61] *Ibid.*

TABLE 2

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULT CLASSES OF M.P.L.A., 1956–1960[a]

Year	Malay	Chinese	English	Total
1956	-	-	-	700
1957	149	362	159	670
1958	55	158	26	231
1959	37	97	12	146
1960	39	99	11	149

[a]Source: Annual Reports of M.P.L.A., 1956–60.

With the exception of a few Malay libraries, there was hardly any increase in the number of libraries between 1957 and 1960. In fact, the number of Chinese libraries decreased. So that there was no overall increase of libraries after 1957. Similarly, the number of adult classes also declined at a startling rate between 1957 and 1960.

Thus since 1957 the M.P.L.A. has been practically stagnant. The main reason why it has not been able to carry on its work is that it lacks finance. Being a voluntary association, the M.P.L.A., has had to rely mainly on donations from private individuals and organizations such as the Asia Foundation and the Social Welfare Lotteries Board. The Government itself has occasionally made grants to help finance the Association's adult education work.

Since Malaya's attainment of independence, however, these sources of financial support have dried up. The Government, for instance, has taken over the work of adult education, hitherto carried out by voluntary organizations such as the M.P.L.A. and the Adult Education Association, and has stopped supporting the M.P.L.A.

The Asia Foundation too has withdrawn its support of the M.P.L.A. It is difficult to ascertain the true reasons for this action. But it is believed that the Foundation was requested to stop financing the Association by the Federation Government on the ground that the M.P.L.A. has fallen under Communist influence. The reluctance of the Foundation's Representative to discuss the matter, and the stony silence with which the M.P.L.A. officials meet any enquiries, make it impossible to either confirm or deny this rumour. It would be ironical indeed if the M.P.L.A. has become a Communist-front organization because it was founded specifically to combat Communist ideology.

Even if the rumour is not true, it is unlikely that the Government or the Asia Foundation would continue to support the M.P.L.A. to-day. The Association is still basically a Chinese organization, despite its efforts to attain a "Malayan character," and the independent Government of Malaya is less approving of communal organizations than were the British, during whose rule the Association was founded.

The very Chinese character of the M.P.L.A. is revealed in the range of its activities. Apart from organizing libraries and adult education classes, the Association appears to have interpreted its objective "to promote culture and education... by establishing libraries and other means" very liberally. Between 1955 and 1960, it also provided scholarships to Chinese school and Nanyang University students; promoted sporting activities; organized dances, picnics, singing groups, harmonica teams, and dramatic troupes which toured the country to raise money for its libraries; and even distributed fruit and vegetable seeds to farmers. Thus it can be seen that the Association was a hybrid society and very similar in character and motives to various social, benevolent, self-help and cultural associations which the Chinese are so fond of establishing.

The M.P.L.A., may be considered to be the first attempt to establish a public library service on a national scale. Its failure emphasizes forcibly the undesirability and impracticability of voluntary support in the field of library promotion. It illustrates, what the experience of other countries has already shown, that a national library service can only be provided if supported by public funds.

THE PERSATUAN PERPUSTAKAAN PERSEKUTUAN TANAH MELAYU

The Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (P.P.P.T.M.), the forerunner of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia, unlike the M.P.L.A. was not founded for the purpose of setting up and maintaining libraries of its own, although one of its objectives was to agitate for the establishment of a national library system in Malaya. It was essentially a professional association formed to encourage the development of libraries and of librarianship as a profession.

The P.P.P.T.M. shared a common origin with the Singapore Library Association in the Malayan Library Group, a body formed in 1955 by librarians and library workers in Singapore and Malaya.

The idea of starting the Group originated with two librarians, Mr. W.J. Plumbe and Mrs. Hedwig Anuar, then of the University Library in Singapore. In 1954, they approached Mr. Ernest Clark, then University Librarian, and asked him to support their plan. At first Mr. Clark resisted the idea on the ground that the formation of a professional association was premature. And he could justify this view by pointing to the fact that at the time, Malaya and Singapore had only about half a dozen qualified librarians, of whom only one, Mrs. Anuar, was a local person. However, both Mr. Plumbe and Mrs. Anuar were undeterred by this, and in the face of their persistence, Mr. Clark yielded.

A circular was sent out towards the end of 1954 inviting all librarians and interested persons to attend a preliminary meeting to discuss the desirability of forming a library group or association. Forty-seven people attended this meeting, which was held on 7th January, 1955, in the University Library, and came to the unanimous decision that a library group should be formed and that it should cover Malaya as well as Singapore. The meeting also set up a Draft Constitution Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Clark. The

Committee after several meetings drew up a Constitution, which was adopted at an inaugural meeting held on 25th March, 1955. Thus was the Malayan Library Group formed.[62]

The formation of the Malayan Library Group was undoubtedly an important milestone in the history of librarianship in Malaya. As Mr. Beda Lim, the first editor of the *Malayan Library Group Newsletter*, has so aptly remarked,

> ...it assembles together for the first time all those in this country who are engaged or interested in library work. This is of great significance in a country where no professional body exists, where in fact there is no form of organization whatsoever to unite librarians and to serve as a meeting ground for the exchange of ideas. The existence of the Group also testifies to the fact that there has arisen in this country a new and growing class of professional people, namely, those engaged in library work of one kind or another, who are conscious of the value of library services to the community, and who are banding together for the purpose of seeking ways and means to enlarge and improve these services. This is important in a country where the organization of libraries has hitherto been, on the whole, haphazard, and where it was not until after the war that the need for qualified librarians began to be felt.[63]

The Constitution of the Malayan Library Group laid down five main objects: (*a*) to unite all persons engaged in library work or interested in libraries; (*b*) to promote the better administration of libraries; (*c*) to encourage the establishment and development of libraries in Malaya; (*d*) to encourage professional education and training for librarianship; (*e*) to undertake such activities, including the holding of meetings and conferences, as are appropriate to the attainment of the above objects.

The Malayan Library Group only existed for four years (from March 1955 to October 1958) under that name. During this period, it received much support from the Asia Foundation, whose grants enabled it to carry out its activities without running into financial difficulties. Despite the fact that there were only a few qualified librarians in Malaya and Singapore, the Group received enthusiastic support from many non-librarians and library workers. Table 3 illustrates the rapid growth of its membership.

TABLE 3

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF MALAYAN LIBRARY GROUP, 1955–1958[a]

Year of Existence	Number of Members			
	Singapore	Malaya	Overseas	Total
Year I (Mar.–Oct. 1955)	40	14	-	54
Year II (Nov. 1955–Oct. 1956)	41	24	12	77
Year III (Nov. 1956–Oct. 1957)	30	45	6	81
Year IV (Nov. 1957–Oct. 1958)	52	37	9	98

[a] Source: Annual Reports of Malayan Library Group, 1955–58.

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[62] Interview with Mr. W.J. Plumbe, 4th January, 1962.

[63] Beda Lim, "The Group and the Malayan Public," *MLGN*, 1(1):1, July 1955.

The Group endeavoured to attain its objectives in several ways. Among its more important activities were the following:

(*a*) It published a *Newsletter* containing summaries of talks, notices of meetings, news items and articles. The first issue of the *Malayan Library Group Newsletter* appeared in July, 1956, under the editorship of Mr. Beda Lim. The *Newsletter* was indexed in both *Library Literature* and *Library Science Abstracts.*

(*b*) It held regular meetings of members every year, where current problems in librarianship were discussed, and organized book exhibitions, talks, and film shows on various aspects of librarianship.

(*c*) It organized classes in librarianship which were designed to improve the quality of library service provided. These classes were of two kinds: (i) short introductory classes, such as the various vacation courses for teacher-librarians, where the rudiments of librarianship were taught; and (ii) more formal courses for students aspiring to sit the (British) Library Association examinations.

(*d*) Perhaps the most important objective of the Group was to make the Malayan public library-conscious. In all its activities it constantly stressed the importance of libraries particularly in the post-independent era, and endeavoured to arouse public opinion in favour of government legislation to provide for a free public library service on a national scale in Malaya.

Early in 1956 the Group was requested by the Adult Education Association of Malaya to submit a "Memorandum on Public Library Service in the Federation of Malaya" for presentation to the Minister for Education.[64] Data was collected from librarians and other people and the Memorandum was transmitted to the Minister for Education through the Adult Education Association in April 1956.

The Memorandum began by surveying existing library facilities in urban and rural areas and in schools, and found that no library in Malaya was adequately meeting the needs of the population owing to the inadequate book stock, most of which was in a poor condition, inadequate book funds and lack of qualified librarians. It stressed that "during the past decade a general need for increased and improved library services has become very apparent in Malaya;"[65] that a satisfactory library service could not be achieved by piecemeal efforts of local governments alone; and that "sound planning on a broad co-operation basis must replace drift and chance and a narrow localism in library development; the heart of the matter is the establishment of a sound framework of larger units of library service."[66]

The Memorandum concluded that "it is urgently necessary to introduce legislation to establish a Library Board and to appoint a suitably experienced Director in order to provide a national bibliographical centre and a nationwide system of free public libraries for the people of Malaya."[67]

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[64] A complete transcription of the "Memorandum" is given in Appendix A.

[65] *Ibid.*, par. 9.

[66] *Ibid.*, par. 11.

[67] *Ibid.*, par. 25

The national library service as envisaged in the Memorandum was to be financed from public funds,[68] and would be provided by a Headquarters library, possibly in Kuala Lumpur, and at least five regional libraries, situated in carefully selected towns, which would serve as centres for distribution to their respective regions. They would also be responsible for static libraries in smaller towns and villages and for mobile libraries to serve areas where populations are small and scattered. The compilation of union catalogues and the establishment of a national bibliographical centre were also stressed as necessary adjuncts of a national library service.[69]

The Government appears to have ignored the Memorandum since nothing more was heard of it for the next two years. The continuing war against the Communists, and the preoccupation of the Government with the final transfer of power from the British Government and the subsequent elections, may have been partly responsible for this. Because of this inaction, however, the Malayan Library Group published the Memorandum in November 1958, accompanied with the following statement:

> The Federation of Malaya has been an independent nation and a member of the Commonwealth since 31st August, 1957. Almost alone amongst the Commonwealth countries, it still lacks a public library service for its people. Other nations, newly independent or about to become so, such as Indonesia, Philippines, Ghana, Nigeria and the West Indies have well developed systems of public libraries. National pride surely will not allow us to lag behind them any longer. Libraries for the people are as essential as the need for schools, hospitals, roads, new industries and the rest. Libraries spell education and knowledge, and it is only with these that we can hope to play our part worthily as one of the newest members in the family of nations today.[70]

The Memorandum received a good press and considerable support from the public. It jolted the Government out of its indifference, and in 1959 the Prime Minister of Malaya indicated that the idea of a national library service had been accepted by the Government,[71] but it was not until 1966 that the Government actually established a committee to look into the question of a national library for the country.

The name of the Malayan Library Group was changed to the Library Association of Malaya and Singapore at the Annual General Meeting held in November, 1958. This change in name arose partly from the belief that the Group had become large enough to be called an Association, and partly from desire to make it clear that the Group included the two territories of Malaya and Singapore.[72]

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[68] *Ibid.*, par. 17.

[69] *Ibid.*, pars. 14–16.

[70] "Public Libraries for Malaya," *MLGN*, 3(2):3, November 1958.

[71] H. Anuar, "Patterns of Library Service in Asia and the Pacific Islands," *LT*, 8(2):147, October 1959.

[72] H. Anuar, "Malayan Library Group to the Library Association of Singapore; the First Six Years," *SLJ*, 1(1):3, April 1961.

The Library Association of Malaya and Singapore did not survive for very long. With Malaya's attainment of independence, the Federation began to cut off its ties with Singapore, and adopted the policy of not approving the formation of any pan-Malayan societies or institutions. Hence, when the Library Association of Malaya and Singapore applied for registration as a pan-Malayan body in 1959, registration was refused, and the Association had no alternative but to split into separate associations for each territory: the Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu and the Library Association of Singapore.

The inaugural meeting of the P.P.P.T.M. was held on 16th January, 1960, and the following Council members were elected:

President : Mr. W.J. Plumbe.
Vice-President : Mrs. Hedwig Anuar.
Hon. Secretary : Tuan Syed Ahmad bin Ali.
Hon Treasurer : Enche Abdul Rashid bin Ismail.
Members : Enche Abdul Wahab bin Majid, Mr. C.J. Manuel, Mrs. G.N. Nesaratnam, Mr. A.G. Parker, and Mrs. Teerath Ram.

During the first year of the Persatuan's existence (January 1960–March 1961) it had a total membership of 132, of whom 4 were life members, 103 individual members and 25 institutional members.[73] By the end of the second year (March 1961–March 1962), this had risen to 202 (Life,5; Individual, 146; and Institutional, 51).[74]

The Persatuan began publishing a professional journal, the *Malayan Library Journal* in October 1960. It also provided help and advice to librarians and library workers in all kinds of libraries—special, university, public and school. However, it concerned itself particularly with three major problems during the period of its existence.

Firstly, it endeavoured to persuade the Government to initiate legislation to provide for the establishment of a public library service on a national scale. However, it had only limited success in impressing the Government about the urgency of Malaya's library needs. Though the Government was aware of the importance of libraries, as was evident from the public speeches of Ministers and Government officials, there were so many priorities in its development programmes that it had inevitably been tempted to relegate libraries into the background.

Secondly, the Persatuan worked to improve the condition of school libraries because, in the words of one of its past Presidents, Mrs. Anuar, "school libraries make up the largest group of libraries in Malaya" and also because "with the increased expansion of schools all over Malaya and the large school-going population, they are also the most important, socially and educationally."[75]

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[73] Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, *Annual Report, 1960/61.* (Mimeographed).

[74] Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu, *Annual Report 1961/62.* (Mimeographed).

The Persatuan set up a School Library Service Committee to encourage the development and use of school libraries and to promote the training of teacher-librarians. It also issued a special number of the *Malayan Library Journal*, which was devoted to articles on the organization and administration of school libraries, and sent reprints of these to all the school in Malaya.

Through the efforts of the Persatuan, the Ministry of Education established a one-year training course for teacher-librarians at the Specialist Teachers' Training Institute in Kuala Lumpur, in the beginning of 1962. This course was made possible by a special U.S. grant, and was initially run by Miss Nelle McCalla, Associate Professor of Library Science and Field Consultant to School Libraries from the Indiana State College. The aim and purpose of the course was

> to provide at least one person for each State with sufficient library training to organize and develop school libraries within the designated area and to plan short courses to train other teachers to assist in the development of libraries in schools.[76]

Finally, in addition to being concerned about the training of teacher-librarians, the Persatuan was involved with the training of librarians in general. Before World War II, there was not a single qualified librarian in the whole of Malaya. At the end of 1961, there were only about a dozen, all of whom, with the exception of one, were stationed in libraries within Kuala Lumpur. And of these, only three were local librarians.

To improve this situation, the Persatuan conducted short courses in librarianship; provided study facilities for those who wished to obtain external qualifications in librarianship; and helped aspiring librarians to obtain scholarships to study overseas. But these were only temporary measures, and obviously inadequate to meet Malaya's future needs for librarians. Consequently, the Persatuan pressed for the establishment of a School of Librarianship, possibly associated with the University of Malaya.[77]

D. *Conclusion*

We have surveyed almost one hundred and fifty years of library development in Malaya, and have shown that most developments in libraries and librarianship have taken place since World War II, and particularly since Malaya's achievement of independence. Malaya has owed much of her progress in libraries to private initiative and philanthropic organizations. But private and voluntary support is not the answer to Malaya's library problems. More governmental support on a national level is required.

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[75] H. Anuar, "Library Needs in the Federation of Malaya: the Presidential Address, 1962," *MLJ*, 2(3):110, April 1962.

[76] Nelle McCalla, "Library Science Courses at Specialist Teachers' Training Institute, 1962," *MLJ*, 2(3):115, April 1962.

[77] The University's Senate has approved in principle the idea of a Library School attached to the University of Malaya, but whether anything will materialize from this only time will tell.

Fortunately for Malaya, there is no opposition to library development in official circles. An increasing number of people are beginning to appreciate the inconsistency of demanding more schools and adult literary classes while little or nothing is done to provide public libraries, and to realize that this lop-sided approach to education must be corrected if the vast expenditure on education is not to be wasted.

CHAPTER III

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN MALAYA

A. *Introduction*

In a democratic community the term public library is normally used to describe a service which is authorized by legislation, open to the public without charge, and financed by public funds. In this chapter, however, we include in our definition of public libraries, those libraries which charge subscriptions, but are public libraries in the sense that they are not restricted to any particular clientele, are partially supported by municipal or state government funds, and make their material freely available to the public for use on their premises, while reserving the right to extend borrowing privileges only to those who pay a membership subscription or a deposit.

Public library development in Malaya is still in the rudimentary stage. There is no organized public library system for the whole country, merely the existence of small unco-ordinated units, most of which charge subscriptions, have poor and worn out collections, give poor service, suffer from inadequate funds, and lack trained librarians.

At present no legislation on a national level exists for the provision and maintenance of public libraries. Municipal authorities are permitted under Section 2(3) of the Town Boards (Amendment) Act, 1954, among other things, to expend money for the "institution and maintenance of public libraries." Very few Town Councils have taken advantage of this provision, and most libraries are still managed by private organizations and societies, although the municipal authorities frequently provide small grants to assist them. Moreover, since there is no stipulation that the libraries provided by municipal authorities shall be free and no provision as to how the libraries are to be provided for or maintained, such local government authorities as have assumed responsibility for providing library services charge subscriptions to help finance them. The exception is the Ipoh Town Council, which since July 1962 has been running a free public library service for Ipoh residents.

Malaya's public library development has been hindered considerably by the Japanese Occupation, and the Emergency. A multi-lingual population, widespread illiteracy, and a thinly scattered population over large areas in rural districts have been contributory factors. But perhaps, the most serious hindrance to public library development in pre-independent Malaya was the lack of government interest. As Mr. William Martin, a former librarian of the Penang Library, remarked in a paper submitted to the Interim Committee of the Federation of Asian Libraries Association in 1957, the year when Malaya became an independent nation:

> the leadership and initiative which should have come from the government were not given. Any progress which has been made in establishing libraries is due to private endeavours which have neither sufficient money nor influ-

ence to provide the backing necessary to initiate such a vast undertaking as a national library service.[1]

Since Malaya's achievement of independence and the end of the Emergency, the Government of Malaya has promised to tackle the problems of library development in Malaya more seriously. The Government is beginning to realize that libraries are not an expensive luxury but a social and educational necessity. In the words of the former Minister of Education, the Honourable Enche Abdul Rahman bin Haji Talib:

> Kita semua bahawa memang ada kekurangan dan kesulitan berkenaan dengan mengadakan perpustakaan2 yang lengkap dengan kaki-tangan2 yang berkelayakan dengan sa-penoh-nya. Negeri kita, Persekutuan Tanah Melayu ada-lah kebelakang daripada banyak negeri2 dalam dunia ini dalam hal perkembangan perpustakaan2, begitu juga negeri ini ada-lah satu langkah di-belakang Singapura, jiran kita yang dekat sa-kali, dalam hal menubohkan satu Perpustakaan Nasional, atau pun "National Library". Pehak2 Kementerian Pelajaran, dan Kerajaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu sedang pun memberi pandangan tentang ini, terutama sa-kali dalam hal menubohkan sa-buah Perpustakaan Nasional, Persekutuan Tanah Melayu.[2]

Interest by the Federal Government is of prime necessity if further progress is to be made in library development in Malaya, where the resources of State and municipal governments are traditionally small.

It is convenient to survey existing provision of public library services in the Federation of Malaya on a State by State basis. The States are arranged in descending order of importance from the point of view of public library services, as follows: (1) Selangor; (2) Penang and Province Wellesley; (3) Malacca; (4) Perak; (5) Johore; (6) Negri Sembilan; (7) Kedah; (8) Kelantan; (9) Perlis; (10) Pahang; (11) Trengganu.

B. *Selangor*

Selangor State covers an area of slightly more than 3,000 square miles and has a total population of 1,012,929 (1957 census), of whom 57% are literate. Yet in 1962 it had only four public libraries, of which three were situated in Kuala Lumpur, the Federal Capital, and one in Klang, the State capital. People living outside Kuala Lumpur had access to the resources of these libraries through the "book trunk" or "book post" services operated by them.

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[1] W.M. Martin, "Public Library Services in Malaya," *Asian Libraries;* a compilation by the FALA Interim Committee for the Delegates to the Organizational Conference in Tokyo, Japan, November, 1957 (Manila: Bureau of Public Libraries, 1957), p. 1. (Mimeographed).

[2] We all realise the shortage and difficulties of establishing libraries, complete with fully-qualified staff. Our country, the Federation of Malaya, is far behind many countries in the world, in the use and spread of libraries; and similarly, we are one step behind Singapore, our closest neighbour, in the establishment of a National Library. The Ministry of Education and the Government of the Federation of Malaya are now giving attention to this matter, especially the question of establishing a National Library of the Federation of Malaya.—Speech by the Minister of Education, the Honourable Enche Abdul Rahman bin Haji Talib, at the Annual General Meeting of the Library Association on 24th March, 1962.

KUALA LUMPUR BOOK CLUB

The largest of Malaya's "public" libraries, the Kuala Lumpur Book Club, like so many of Malaya's early libraries, had its origin in the practice of the European residents of exchanging their books with one another and of eventually pooling their resources to start a library. Some time between 1896 and 1900, permission was obtained from the Selangor State Government to use the room behind the Town Hall which already housed a small Government library containing a few old reference books and available only to the Government personnel.[3] In addition to the use of the room, the Selangor Government promised the library a grant of $1,800 a year on condition that existing members of the Government library and all subordinate Government officers would be allowed to join the new Club on payment of 50 cents and without entrance fee.[4] The annual grant was later reduced to $1,000. From this humble beginning the Kuala Lumpur Book Club grew into Malaya's largest "public" library with a collection of approximately 135,000 volumes of books and periodicals.[5]

Building. In 1925 the Club moved from its accommodation in the Town Hall to the Mercantile Bank Building, and nine years later to the Hardial Singh Building. It has occupied its present quarters in Jalan Raja since 1939. The ground floor of the present premises was built with the aid of a Government loan of $20,000, the final instalment of which was repaid in 1948. The second storey was added in 1956.[6] The present building has seats for 120 readers, and in the Secretary-Librarian's estimation, is capable of holding another 50,000 volumes.[7] The library experiences great difficulty in preserving its stock in the hot and humid atmosphere of Malaya, but lack of funds has prevented it from air-conditioning all but a very small portion of the building. The premises are open for borrowing from 9.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and from 4.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m., Monday through Saturday.[8]

Membership. It has been pointed out that before the Second World War, the membership of most of Malaya's libraries was almost wholly European.[9] The membership of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club was no different. But it has become more popular since the war. Its total membership at the end of April, 1961 was 3,600 of whom 2,900 were Asian.[10] This was still a very small number when we consider the fact that Kuala Lumpur itself had a total population of 316,200 (1957 census) of whom more than 50% were literate. The small membership could be ascribed to the absence of books in the local languages, and to the subscription fees.

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[3] D. Nixon and G. Hawkins, "Kuala Lumpur Book Club—a Pioneer," *MLJ*, 1(4):13, July 1961.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] D. Nixon, Secretary-Librarian, Kuala Lumpur Book Club, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[6] Nixon and Hawkins, *MLJ*, 1(4):15, July 1961.

[7] Nixon, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] See Chap. II.

[10] Nixon and Hawkins, *MLJ*, 1(4):13, July 1961.

The library was to some extent unique in that its membership was not confined to local residents, but also comprised outstation members from as far north as Thailand and as far south as Singapore.[11] Books were delivered to outstation members by rail, post or air freight.

The Book Stock. Until recently, the stock of the library was predominantly fiction. As late as 1953, it was reported that seven-tenths of the library's stock of 80,000 books were fiction: "thrillers, romances, whodunits."[12] The reason for this was undoubtedly that the Kuala Lumpur Book Club was a members' library, administered by a Committee to provide the type of reading material desired by its membership. Nevertheless, by 1953 the Club's character had changed somewhat in response to the requirements of its members, and it began to provide many services which are more closely akin to those of a public library than to those of a commercial rental library purveying cheap fiction.

In 1961, it was reported that the library had a respectable reference collection housed in a separate reference room of more than 2,500 books and 500 volumes of periodicals, in addition to 12,000 reference books kept in the public reading room, that provision was being made for the research student, and that the librarian herself answered reference queries and provided a research service for individuals and institutions. In addition, it was claimed that she had also devoted an appreciable part of her time instructing office librarians and secretaries of newly formed libraries.[13]

The non-fiction section of the library had by then grown considerably and was classified by Dewey. The library also had a good Malaysiana collection which was available for the use of students and research scholars.[14]

The Kuala Lumpur Book Club had all the ingredients of a public library and could conceivably be developed into a fully fledged one. In 1953, the Secretary wrote that the Club would "resist to the death any attempt to be taken over by anyone."[15] At that time the library was in flourishing financial condition. The same is no longer true to-day. Since 1961, it has been plagued by financial troubles, and consequently would now be more amenable to the suggestion of a takeover by the Government.

USIS LIBRARY, KUALA LUMPUR

General character of USIS *libraries.* USIS operates two free public libraries in Malaya: one in Kuala Lumpur and another in Penang. Both libraries are open to anyone above the age of six for registration as members. Essentially, these libraries are no different from the other 176 libraries and 85 reading rooms that USIS operates in 80 countries. They are intended to implement the USIA programme of seeking "to create throughout the world clearer understanding of the American people and the policies and objectives of the United States government."[16]

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[12] D. Nixon and G. Hawkins, "Kuala Lumpur Book Club," *Malaya*, March 1953, p. 159.
[13] Nixon and Hawkins, *MLJ*, 1(4):15, July 1961.
[14] Nixon, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*
[15] Nixon and Hawkins, *Malaya*, March 1953, p. 158.

The libraries are thus never wholly divorced from their role as propaganda mediums, and are in fact an additional arm in the arsenal of the United States Government fashioned to meet the challenges of the "cold-war"; nor are they completely divorced from other USIS activities, but operate in close co-ordination with the press, film and radio divisions and programmes.

For example, the USIS library in Kuala Lumpur helps to distribute anti-Communist pamphlets; provides free lists of such pamphlets, which are printed in English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil, to library users; makes available to various schools and organizations the films and recording owned by the Film and Radio Section; and distributes the "Voice of America" programme booklets.[17]

Even the books and periodicals stocked in the USIS libraries reflect both the long-range and day-to-day objectives of USIS. The selection of publications is based on certain specific criteria. Basically, materials are selected with a view to

> (1) Providing useful information about the United States, its people, culture, institutions, policies, problems, achievements, and diverse views on national and international issues, including materials suitable to counteract hostile propaganda campaigns directed against the United States;
> (2) Demonstrating the interest of the United States in other nations, including provision of needed scientific and technical information; or
> (3) Furnishing evidence of the American intellectual, artistic and spiritual heritage, and combating the charge that our people are lacking in cultural background and tradition.[18]

An Executive directive issued on July 15, 1953, provides that no materials may be selected

> which as judged by their content, advocate destruction of free institutions, promote or reinforce communist propaganda, or are of inferior literary quality, as evidenced by salacious, pornographic, sensational, cheap or shoddy treatment or matter inherently offensive;

and further directs that

> works of avowed communists, persons convicted of crimes involving a threat to the security of the United States, or persons who publicly refuse to answer questions of the Congressional committees regarding their connections with the communist movement, shall not be used, even if their content is unobjectionable, unless it is determined that a particular item is clearly useful for the special purposes of the program. Application of this rule to authors who refuse to testify does not mean that they are presumed to be communists or communist sympathizers but simply reflects the fact that such action by an author normally gives him a public reputation which raises serious questions as to the usefulness of his books in the program.[19]

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[16] "Role of Libraries in the USIA Program," *ALA Bulletin*, 55:180, February 1961.
[17] M.L. Nichols, "Malaya's First Free Public Library," *LLAB*, 14(1):15–16, Winter 1951.
[18] P.S. Jennison, "How American Books Reach Readers Abroad," *LT*, 5(1):10, July 1956.
[19] *Ibid.*

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Book selection is principally made by the local libraries from annotated book and periodical lists compiled by the Washington headquarters, but local libraries are permitted to make some selections from book reviews, publishers' brochures and other sources, provided the books thus selected are in harmony with the objectives of USIS.

It must be pointed out, however, that not all books stocked in USIS libraries are of a propaganda nature. Although the libraries receive annually a great deal of U.S. Government publications dealing with anti-communism and copies of special reports by the President and certain commissions, they are also stocked with such books and periodicals as are normally found in a medium-size American public library. Indeed, it has been said that in many respects, the USIS libraries function along the same lines as an American public library.[20]

USIS, *Kuala Lumpur*.[21] The USIS library in Kuala Lumpur was formally opened on February 15, 1950. At that time it had a collection of about 6,000 books, and was housed on the third floor of a small office building. It now occupies spacious quarters in the ground floor of the Loke Yew Building, which is in the heart of Kuala Lumpur and therefore ideally situated. The seating capacity of the library is 58.

In 1961, its stock numbered about 17,400 books of which 16,500 were in English, 500 in Chinese and 400 in Malay. It then received some 225 serials. The books are classified by Dewey, and there is a dictionary catalogue using Library of Congress cards.

The library had only 2,000 members in 1951. In 1955, its membership had risen to 4,620 adults and 10,780 children. No current figures are available, but the number of members can be expected to be even larger. The impressive membership figures of the USIS library proves that there is a great demand for library services, especially among school children, if these are provided free. The comparatively small membership of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club, a subscription library, reinforces this view.

The services of the USIS library extend beyond Kuala Lumpur. Individuals living outside Kuala Lumpur are allowed to join the library, and receive their books by mail. The library operates a "book trunk" service, whereby boxes of books containing about fifty titles are loaned to various institutions and organizations throughout Malaya for as long a period as three months at a time. New "book trunks" are supplied when the old ones are returned.

The library is very well patronised. Book issues in 1960 totalled 73,840. This figure excludes the estimated circulation of 40,000 through the "book trunk" service. The library is open from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., Monday through to Saturday, and is closed on Sunday and public holidays.

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[20] H. James, "Role of the Information Library in the United States International Program," *Library Quarterly*, 23:75–114, April 1953.

[21] Current information on the USIS Library, K.L., was supplied by the librarian in reply to a questionnaire of the P.P.P.T.M. despatched on 10th February, 1961 (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

THE BRITISH COUNCIL LIBRARY, KUALA LUMPUR

The British Council runs a library in Kuala Lumpur and a reading room in Penang. The Penang reading room, which until recently occupied the same building as the Penang Library, has only a very modest collection of books, which are mainly of the ready-reference type and are used to answer questions concerning life in the United Kingdom particularly as regards the availability of educational facilities.[22]

Apparently the British Council had a small library in Kuala Lumpur as early as 1949. However, it did not really give very good service in the early years because of lack of staff, funds and suitable quarters. The Kate Ferguson survey of 1950, which revealed the deficiencies in Malaya's library facilities, influenced the British Council authorities considerably and made them reconsider their library policy. From that date, an effort was made to provide a better public library service. In 1955, the library had nearly 9,000 books, all in English, and a membership of 549 adults and 1844 children. In May 1956, the library moved to its present premises, built not only from funds supplied by the British Council but also from grants made by the Kuala Lumpur Coronation Celebrations Fund, the Sir Henry Gurney Memorial Fund, and the Federation Government.[23]

The library occupies the ground floor of the new building, which also houses the Council offices and a large hall for plays, lectures, exhibitions or film shows. The library is very well designed and equipped, and seated fifty readers in 1955.[24] Its premises have since been extended.

The library's membership has risen from a few hundred in 1949 to 17,300 in 1960, almost five times the size of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club's current membership, thus illustrating once again the demand for free public library services in Malaya. As is typical of all Malaya's public libraries in the post-independent era, children and youth form the greater part of the total membership of the British Council Library. This pattern is largely due to the fact that about 50% of the population of Malaya are under 21 years of age, and to the fact that the youth of Malaya constitute the majority of the new literates.

The book selection policy of the library is of course geared to the basic policies and objectives of the British Council. Its book stock, while of wide scope, falls within the framework of "British arts and sciences and British institutions."[25] Nevertheless, within the limits set down by the Books Department in London, the British Council librarian has considerable freedom of choice in the selection of material for his library, and the collection generally reflects local needs and demands.

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[22] D. Gunton and S. Mah, "The Work of the British Council Library," *MLJ*, 1(4):9 July 1961.

[23] C.J. Manuel, "A Survey of Library Facilities in the Federation of Malaya," Paper submitted at the Delhi International Seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Asia, 6th–26th October, 1955, p. 3. (Typewritten).

[24] D. Gunton, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[25] G.A. Glaister, " A British Council Librarian Abroad," *LAR*, 54:329, October 1952.

The experience of the British Council Library shows that in Malaya the most popular subjects, in descending order of importance are:

> history, geography and travel, sport, biography, English literature and language, education, medicine, engineering, law, painting, mathematics, followed by a co-equal group consisting of sociology, economics, commercial subjects, chemistry and photography.[26]

The library's current stock of over 17,000 books and 83 current serials reflects this demand. It also possesses a stock of non-book material: gramophone records, tapes and filmstrips.[27]

Book issues in 1960 totalled 127,804 of which 64,121 books were loaned to children. Curiously enough, among Malayan adults more non-fiction books are borrowed than fiction ones. In 1960 there were 38,341 non-fiction issues as against 25,342 fiction issues. If the book issues of the British Council Library are any guide, there appears to be a difference in the pattern of reading between Malayans and Europeans. The latter centre their reading around "fiction, fine arts, history and geography," while the former tend to engage in less recreational reading and to consider "books as a means to an end and the library as a place in which to browse in search of instruction."[28]

This need for more books which can help in study and research is at present not adequately met by the library. Lack of funds prevents more than a "token quick-reference stock" being held in the library.[29] The British Council cannot of course be blamed for not providing a reference and research collection. After all it is essentially a British information library, or as Glaister has put it, "a special library not by virtue of its catering for foreign specialists but by virtue of its special ends."[30] Indeed, it is already doing more than its share in providing a service which the Federation Government has so far neglected to supply.

It is claimed that a British Council library, in its technical arrangement, "derives from the British public library."[31] This is true of the British Council library in Kuala Lumpur. The stock is classified by Dewey, and there is a classified catalogue using BNB cards.[32]

The British Council not only provides a public library service for Kuala Lumpur residents, but also operates a book box scheme whereby boxes of books are loaned to schools and colleges in all the States of the Federation, and frequently helps to inaugurate new library services through presentations of books and periodicals.[33]

THE KLANG GURNEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Klang is officially the capital of the State of Selangor, and has a population of 75,600 nearly all of whom are literate. Yet in this town there is only one public library with a stock of about 11,500 books, mainly in the English language. But the situation in Klang is typical of most of the major towns of the Federation.

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[26] Gunton and Mah, *MLJ*, 1(4):11, July 1961.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[30] Glaister, *LAR*, 54:329, October 1952.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] Gunton, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*

[33] *Ibid.*

The Klang Gurney Memorial Library, which was officially opened on the 15th of September, 1956 by the Sultan of Selangor, has its roots in the older Klang Library, conceived in 1947 and born on 18th June, 1948.[34]

The Klang library was typical of many of Malaya's public libraries. It was run by a society, managed by an elected library committee, and was financed by membership subscriptions and a small government grant of $500. It was inadequately housed in the Third Class Waiting Room of the Railway Station, rented for the purpose.[35]

The old Klang library opened with a membership of about 200.[36] This had risen to about 450 by 1950. At this date the library's book stock totalled 2,500 volumes.[37] The library continued to grow slowly with annual accessions averaging less than 1,000 books. In 1955, the library had about 6,370 books, a membership of 177 adults and 645 children, and was receiving an annual State Government grant of $1,000.[38]

In 1956, this library became the nucleus of the Klang Gurney Memorial Library, when its book stock and assets were transferred to the new library, built from funds raised by the Henry Gurney Memorial Library Fund Committee, partly from public subscription and partly from contributions by the Selangor State Government and the Klang Town Council.[39]

Although the new library had a ready-made collection of about 7,000 books and an attractive building, it started off on a wrong footing. In the first place, it had no qualified staff, and no attempt was ever made to obtain any. In the second place, no provision was made to ensure adequate and continued support for the library from public funds. Although both the State Government and the Klang Town Council have been making regular annual grants of $1,000 and $1,500 respectively, there is no guarantee that these grants will be continued indefinitely.[40]

In the third place, the major part of the library's income is derived from subscriptions. In the context of Malayan conditions, subscriptions have never proved a very reliable or even adequate source of income. The experience of the Klang Gurney Memorial Library since its foundation illustrates this very clearly. In 1957, the total amount collected from subscriptions was $8,052.

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[34] *Klang Gurney Memorial Library* (Pamphlet issued on the occasion of the official opening, 15th September, 1956).

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] K.D. Ferguson, *A Survey to Ascertain the Existing Available Reading Material in the Federation of Malaya and the Present Provision of Books and Other Literature* (Kuala Lumpur: British Council, 1st May 1950), p. 23 (Typewritten).

[38] Manuel, p. 4.

[39] *Klang Gurney Memorial Library.*

[40] That this is so is clearly illustrated by the fact that a few months ago the Selangor Government withheld payment of its annual grant to the library for an undisclosed reason.

This has been decreasing since, and in 1960 only amounted to $6,122, a decrease of 25% in four years.[41]

In addition to proving a very unreliable source of income, subscription fees have tended to restrict the size of the membership and consequently its use, and have prevented the library from developing a more rounded and sound collection because the management committee has been bound by its commercial obligation to its members to supply what they want.

The use of untrained and unqualified staff and the lack of adequate finances have thus prevented the library from providing a service which would be considered adequate and satisfactory by modern standards.

When Dennis Gunton, the former Library Adviser of the British Council, Malaya, visited the library in 1961 at the request of the P.P.P.T.M. (Malayan Library Association), he reported that the library possessed a poor selection of books, most of which were crudely lettered and badly in need of repairs; very few and unrepresentative books in the vernacular languages; a poor reference stock; an "awkward, irregular and unsuitable scheme" of classification based on 13 main classes and alphabetical arrangement; an "involved catalogue-cum-stock register"; and a "difficult system" of issuing books.[42]

On the basis of Mr. Gunton's findings and recommendations, the P.P.P.T.M. in 1961 helped the Klang Gurney Memorial Library Committee to draw up a memorandum on the future development of the library for presentation to the Selangor Government.[43]

The memorandum began by stating that with existing funds the library had been "totally unable to provide either sufficient books or the type of educational books that appear to be needed in Klang."[44] It affirmed the Library Committee's belief that the time was right to start a free public library in Klang, and stated the following reasons for the belief:

(*a*) People need access to educational books which do not exist in the town at present.

(*b*) Provision of suitable books would help to keep young people beneficially occupied in their leisure time and would provide an antidote to unsuitable films, juvenile delinquency and gangsterism.

(*c*) Klang is to be the State capital. It is already an important commercial centre and it is likely to grow in importance as dock facilities are further developed at Port Swettenham. A good reference library—which would be a source of factual information to the whole community—is therefore required. It is known that accessibility of information assists economic development.

(*d*) It is important to encourage interest in the Malay language. A comprehensive collection of books in Malay, and also in Chinese and Tamil should be provided.

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[41] Klang Gurney Memorial Library, *Communication to the P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[42] Dennis Gunton, "The Klang Gurney Memorial Library: A Report, 29th April, 1961," p. 2–3. (Mimeographed).

[43] *Memorandum on Library Development in Klang Area:* Submitted by Klang Gurney Memorial Library Committee to the State Government of Selangor.

[44] *Ibid.*, par. 1.

(*e*) Newly literate persons need to be able to improve their literacy by having access to suitable books, such as would be provided in a public library.

(*f*) There is very little in Klang at present that may be regarded as 'cultural'. If the town is to develop, its cultural life must improve. Public libraries have been called 'the poorman's university' and their provision gives an opportunity to everyone to continue education after formal education has ended. Intellectual, social, and economic advance would become possible once a public library has been provided. Such a library might become a cultural centre, and provide a meeting-place for worthwhile societies, and lectures and educational films might be made available in the library building.[45]

The memorandum estimated that the establishment of a free public library service for the Klang area would involve a capital expenditure of approximately $521,000 which would be needed for the purchase of the initial stock of books, shelving and office equipment, and an annually recurrent expenditure of $50,000, which was more than five times the current expenditure on the Klang Gurney Memorial Library.[46] The memorandum suggested that the funds for the capital expenditure should be obtained from sources outside Malaya, such as UNESCO, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, or the Asia Foundation, while the annually recurrent requirements should be met in equal parts by the Selangor Government and the Klang Town Council.[47] It hoped that some time in the future, the free public library set up in Klang would become the headquarters of a library system covering the whole of Selangor (with the exception of Kuala Lumpur) and providing a service through the use of bookmobiles and book box schemes.[48]

The memorandum was presented to the Selangor Government early in 1962, but the State Government apparently did not pay any attention to this unsolicited memorandum. It is indeed a pity that the relatively modest proposals contained in the memorandum have been rejected, because it is hardly likely that the Klang Gurney Memorial Library can improve its present services without additional state aid and without being converted into a free public library.

C. *Penang*

Penang State comprises the island of Penang and the adjacent territory on the mainland, known as Province Wellesley. The State has a total area of about 400 square miles and a population of 572,100 (1957 census). About 60% of the population are literate in any language. The State had three public libraries, two of which are on Penang Island: the Penang Library with

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[45] *Ibid.*, par. 2.
[46] *Ibid.*, par. 4.
[47] *Ibid.*, par. 5.
[48] *Ibid.*, par. 6.

33,000 books and the USIS library with about 10,000 books. The other library was located in Butterworth, the main town of Province Wellesley, and was unique in being both a free public library and a school library. It had about 8,000 books (1961 statistics).

THE PENANG LIBRARY

History. Founded in 1817, the Penang Library is the oldest library in Malaya, which is not surprising since it was on Penang island that the British first secured a foothold on the Malay Peninsula. As most of the records of this library were destroyed during the Second World War, our knowledge of the history of the library before 1945 is obtained from two major sources: a short article in *Twentieth Century Impressions of Malaya,* edited by A. Wright and H.A. Cartwright; and a brief history of the library included in the Annual Report of the library for 1945, written by Mr. Ong Chong Keng, who was then its librarian.

Apparently the library was founded for the twin purpose of providing recreational reading material for the European community and of forming "a collection of Malayan and Eastern manuscripts as well as specimens of Art and Nature from various countries around."[49] It was a library that catered for the wealthy and prosperous for it charged a very high subscription (for that period) of $48.00 per annum, in addition to demanding an entrance fee of $25.00.[50] From all accounts, it was a very exclusive library during the nineteenth century, and its membership was a veritable *Who's Who* of society during that period.

The library was under the charge of an elected Committee, whose first incumbents were: R. Ibbetson (then paymaster and Civil Store Keeper), K. Murchinson, A.T. Kerr, Major J.M. Coombs as Secretary and David Brown as Treasurer.[51]

It is not known where the library was originally located, this knowledge being buried under the debris of lost or destroyed records. But we know that some time before 1880, the library occupied quarters in the old Chinese Protectorate Office in Downing Street. In 1880 it was removed to the Town Hall, and in 1905 to its present quarters in the Supreme Court Building, Farquhar Street.[52]

The library attained a more public character in 1880 when it approached the Government for a grant to help it meet its debts. The Government consented to give a grant of $1,500, but stipulated that two officers of the Government should be members of the Committee of Management and that a free reading room should be opened for the public.[53] However, the public reading room and the members' reading room appear to have been kept apart until 1954, when the two reading rooms were combined into one.[54] Non-subscribers could apply for use of the books kept in the part of the library from which they were shut out, although it is doubtful if they made much use of this privilege. Effective use of the library's resources was only made by the subscribers, and the public reading room in the main developed into a "rest room for the town's unemployed."[55]

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[49] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1945*, p. 2.

[50] *Ibid.* A decision made to increase the entrance fee to $50.00 was rescinded before it could be put into effect.

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] A. Wright and H.A. Cartwright (*eds.*), *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya...* (London: Lloyd's Greater Britain Publishing Co., 1908), p. 744.

[53] *Ibid.*

With the help of the government grant the library managed to make ends meet for some time. In 1899, this grant was increased to $2,000[56] and to $4,000 a few years before the Second World War.[57]

In 1907–1908, it was stated that the library had a total collection of 12,000 volumes, a membership of 271, and charged a subscription of $5 per annum for books and $10.00 per annum for books and magazines.[58]

From 1908 to 1941 the history of the library is practically a blank. However, we know that the following were librarians during the period: Mr. A.R. Adams (later Sir Arthur Adams), a prominent lawyer, who was librarian from 1889–1896; Mr. W.A. Bicknell, the Government Auditor, who was librarian from 1896–1914; Mr. Herbert Welham, a newspaper editor, who held office from 1914 to 1926; and Mr. C.R. Samuel, a lawyer, who served as librarian from 1926 until the invasion of Malaya by the Japanese in 1941.[59]

The *Annual Report* of the Penang Library for 1938, the only one which has survived from the pre-war period, states that at this date the library had 552 adult subscribers and 140 junior subscribers. Of the 544 books added to the library in 1938, 268 were fiction. One striking feature was the large number of popular newspapers and periodicals taken by the library—56 in all. This appears to have been a common practice of Malaya's early libraries. If the 1938 *Annual Report* can be taken as typical, the most popular books belonged to the fiction, biography, travel, English literature and history classes. These constituted 40,825 of the total book issues of 50,274 in 1938.

The stock of the Library suffered during the Japanese occupation. About half of the books were either stolen or damaged by bombing and neglect. Its librarians too did not emerge from the war unscathed—one was murdered and another disappeared in a Japanese concentration camp. The library appears to have continued functioning until June 1944, when the Japanese Procurator took over its premises for his own use. The steel shelves were dismantled and the books dispersed. Mr. Ong Chong Keng, who was librarian during the short period when the library functioned under the Japanese, was asked by the British authorities to re-organize the library after the war. He did a very efficient job of tracing and recovering the scattered books and equipment of the library, and within ten days had the library sufficiently well

[54] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1954.*
[55] *Ibid.*
[56] Wright and Cartwright, p. 744.
[57] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1945.*
[58] Wright and Cartwright, p. 744.
[59] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1945.*

organized to invite subscribers to enrol. In 1946, Mr. Ong reported that the library had 1,006 subscribers, of whom 364 were juvenile members.[60]

The library appears to have limped along for a few years with a relatively small income, membership and annual accessions. Kate Ferguson who visited the library in 1950, listed the following factors which she said might help increase the use of the library:[61]

(*a*) Longer hours of opening.
(*b*) Acquisition of books in simplified English.
(*c*) A subscription paid quarterly instead of annually, so that the less affluent could join the library without an undue financial burden at any one time.
(*d*) A card index by author and subject to replace the one destroyed by the Japanese.
(*e*) The classification of non-fiction books according to the Dewey Decimal Classification.
(*f*) The formation of a section of books in Malay.
(*g*) The compilation of a catalogue of books on the early history of Penang to form part of a union catalogue of all such collections and deposited in the University of Malaya Library.
(*h*) More modern methods of publicity, such as book displays, reading lists, and sponsoring discussion groups, to draw the attention of members to many interesting books lying on the shelves.

She concluded that "Penang is of sufficient economic importance and has a large enough educated community to warrant a good library service."[62] Many of Miss Ferguson's suggestions have since been incorporated, but until 1954, the library did not give very effective service because it was run by a succession of honorary librarians who though enthusiastic had neither the time nor the qualifications to do a proper job.[63]

In January, 1954 Miss Wong Pui Huen (now Mrs. Patricia Lim), a graduate of the University of Malaya, became the first paid librarian of the Penang Library.

One of the major tasks confronting her was the re-organization of the library to bring it into line with modern practice. This re-organization involved the disposal of some 10,000 volumes more than half the library's total stock at that time, which were considered "not fit for loan having deteriorated due to frequent borrowing, the activity of white ants and silver fish, or just because of damp and age;[64] the reclassification of the library according to the Dewey Decimal Classification; the establishment of a reference section, a Malaysia section and a Rare Books Room; the amalgamation of the members' reading room with the public reading room into one common reading room; and the introduction of an improved charging system.[65] The librarian also began to engage in a more positive publicity campaign to attract greater use of the library. Extensive use was made of book displays, and the librarian also wrote a weekly column of news and reviews in the *Straits Echo*, the local newspaper. Book purchases were more than doubled from $3,179 in 1953[66] to $7,162 in 1954.[67] In 1955, this was further increased to $9,789.04.[68]

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[60] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1946.*

[61] Ferguson, p. 7.

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] The Hon. Librarians of the Penang Library from 1945–1953 were as follows: Mr. (later Dr.) Ong Chong Keng, Oct. 1945–47; Mr. D. Roper, 1948–49; Mr. Cheah Cheng Poh, 1950–Nov. 1952; Mr. J.A. Black, Nov. 1952–Feb. 1953; Mr. P.H.G. Gibbs, Feb. 1953–Dec. 1953.

[64] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1954.*

Mrs. P. Lim resigned in April, 1956, and was succeeded by Mr. W.M. Martin, who held the office temporarily until the end of January 1958.[69] In February, 1958, Miss B.C. Lim assumed the post of librarian.[70]

There has been a vast improvement in the stock and service of the library since 1954. In 1955, an attempt was made by members of the library to get either the Penang State Government or Municipal (now City) Council or both to take over the library and run it as a free public library. Unfortunately, however, neither bodies were keen to expend the extra money on the library, which such a venture would involve.[71] In the post-merdeka (independence) era, the Penang City Council has shown interest in assuming control of the library.[72] According to the librarian, Miss B.C. Lim (who has since resigned) negotiations with the City Council, begun on and off since 1957, are still under way! The major obstacle in the path is the City Council's unwillingness or inability to bear the whole cost of running a free public library service. The State Government can of course help, but thus far it has been reluctant to increase its annual grants to the library.[73]

The library in 1961. In 1961, the Penang Library was run in accordance with the revised rules and by-laws passed by the Annual General Meeting of members in 1955, and amended slightly since. It was managed by a Committee constituted as follows: (*a*) four ordinary members elected at each Annual General Meeting; (*b*) four members nominated by the City Council; (*c*) three members nominated by the State Government.[74] The Librarian served in an ex-officio capacity as Secretary to the Management Committee.[75]

The membership of the library was very small relative to the population of Penang State. In 1960, the library had a total membership of only 1,778, of whom 1,122 were junior members.[76]

The library had five categories of membership. These were as follows:[77]

(*a*) Honorary members, elected by the Committee.

(*b*) Ordinary members, i.e. persons above the age of eighteen who paid an entrance fee of $3.00 and a subscription which varied according to the number of books and periodicals they were permitted to borrow at any one time.[78]

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[65] *Ibid.*

[66] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1953.*

[67] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1954.*

[68] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1955.*

[69] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1956.*

[70] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1957.*

[71] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1955.*

[72] See "Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of the Penang Library, October 4, 1957."

[73] Interview with Miss B.C. Lim, Librarian, Penang Library, 22nd February, 1962.

[74] Penang Library, *Rules and Bye-Laws* (Penang, 1960), rule 21.

[75] *Ibid.*, rule 37.

[76] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1960.*

[77] Penang Library, *Rules and Bye-Laws*, rules 4–15.

(*c*) Junior members, i.e., persons under eighteen years of age, who paid an annual subscription of $3.00 but no entrance fee and who were entitled to borrow one book at a time, although this was subject to the condition that it was not a new book or that the librarian considered it suitable reading.

(*d*) Visiting members, i.e., persons who paid a monthly subscription of $2.00 and a deposit of $10.00 which was returned on termination of membership and were entitled to borrow four volumes and two magazines at a time.

(*e*) Absent members, i.e., persons whose names were on the Absent Members List and were not required to pay subscription nor entitled to enjoy the privileges of membership.

Subscriptions and other library fees constituted the main source of income of the Penang Library. In 1960, subscriptions and entrance fees totalled $10,004.00, nearly one-third of the total income of the library of $34,717.30.[79] Two other major sources of income were the annual State Government and City Council grants. The State grant was $4,000 in 1945,[80] but was gradually raised to $8,500 in 1949 and remained at this figure for a number of years.[81] The City Council began to support the library in 1951 with a grant of $5,000.[82] The grant was given in recognition of the fact that the library mainly served the residents of Penang Island. This was steadily increased until it stood at $14,000 in 1958.[83]

Staff salaries took up most of the income. In 1960, $12,881.50 were expended on staff salaries, slightly more than 40% of the total expenditure, while expenditure on books and periodicals was only $11,591.49 or slightly more than 36% of the total expenditure.[84]

Considering the library's age, the book stock was a surprisingly small one, comprising only about 33,000 volumes.[85] It will be recalled, however, that about 10,000 volumes were discarded during the re-organization carried out in 1954. The non-fiction section of the library was classified by Dewey. In addition to its general collection of fiction and non-fiction books, the library had a Malaysiana collection of 1,400 volumes, a reference section contain-

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[78] In 1961 ordinary members could subscribe to one of the following classes and obtain the corresponding privileges:

Class	*Subscription per quarter*	*No. of Books*	*No. of Periodicals*
"A"	$5.00	4	2
"B"	$3.50	2	1
"C"	$1.75	1	–

[79] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1960.*

[80] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1945.*

[81] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1949.*

[82] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1951.*

[83] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1958.*

[84] Penang Library, *Annual Report, 1960.*

[85] Interview with Miss Lim, Librarian of Penang Library, 22nd February, 1962.

ing about 750 reference books, and a Rare Books Room harbouring about 1,200 bound volumes. Among the rare books was included another Malaysiana collection of about 600 bound volumes comprising rare and out of print works, bound volumes of newspapers and collections of public records.[86]

USIS LIBRARY, PENANG

USIS operates the only free public library service on Penang Island. The stock of some 10,000 volumes is housed in an adapted building in Beach Street, which can seat sixty readers. In 1962, the librarian reported that the library had a staff of five—a librarian, two senior library assistants, and two library clerks.[87]

When the library first opened in August 1952, there was a rush by the inhabitants of Penang to register as members, and the membership figure for the period August–December, 1952, was 6,500. The membership figure was about 18,000 a few years ago, but it is believed that there are large numbers of inactive members, and consequently the library recently began to re-register its membership. Children have always constituted the great part of the library's membership. The ratio of children to adults in any one year is about 6:4.[88]

Although located on Penang Island, the library was established to provide a service for the whole of North Malaya, or more specifically, the States of Penang, Perak, Kedah, and Perlis. Between 1953 and 1955, it operated a bookmobile, which paid monthly visits to 19 towns in North Malaya. This popular service was regrettably curtailed in 1955 owing to the high cost of operation. The library, however, continued to serve people and institutions outside Penang Island by means of (i) a "book trunk service" whereby a collection of between 50 to 100 books on various subjects graded according to the requirements of the school, club or organization requesting it were loaned to the institutions concerned on a three-monthly basis with the right of renewal; and (ii) a "loan by mail" service whereby persons residing on the mainland could borrow books and magazines through the mail.[89]

USIS, Penang, has played an active part in library promotion in North Malaya. It has made donations of books and magazines to the Penang Library, the Ipoh Library and the Alor Star Public Library, besides helping various school and organizational libraries. It provided training for the library clerk of the recently formed Alor Star Public Library and helped set up the library there.[90]

THE BUTTERWORTH FREE LIBRARY

This library has now ceased to function due to lack of financial support.

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[86] *Ibid.*

[87] Cheah Chooi Leong, Librarian, USIS-Penang, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[88] Cheah Chooi Leong, *Personal Communication*, 5th November 1962.

[89] *Ibid.*

[90] *Ibid.*

It was the first genuinely free public library in Malaya and as such deserves a place of honour in the history of Malayan libraries.

The Butterworth Free Library was unique in that it was both a free public library and a school library. What was even more singular was that it was not supported by public funds, but relied entirely on voluntary gifts and donations for the expansion of its book stock and services.

When some time in 1953, the Adult Education Association of Malaya and the St. Mark's Secondary School decided to sponsor a free public library in Butterworth, the principal town in Province Wellesley, an approach was made to the Butterworth Town Council to help direct and finance it. But the Town Council did not feel "justified in accepting this responsibility."[91]

The refusal of the Town Council did not deter the sponsors who were confident that there was a great need for a free public library in the settlement, and therefore decided to attempt the project without the support of public funds. At a public meeting held towards the end of the year, a committee of public-spirited men and women of all communities was elected to the task of organizing and managing the library.[92]

The library received a tremendous amount of initial support. The St. Mark's Secondary School offered the use of one of its classrooms to house the library, and made a loan of all the books it possessed as well as supplied whatever voluntary help that was required. Gifts of money were received from the Butterworth Branch of the Adult Education Association, the Sir Henry Gurney Memorial Fund, and Mr. Heah Joo Seang, a Penang millionaire; while USIS contributed several books, including two sets of Encyclopaedias (*Britannica* and *Compton's*), the British Council and the Malayan Information Service gave magazines, and Mr. C.J. Manuel, then Assistant Headmaster of St. Mark's School and a leading spirit in the formation of the library, contributed several hundred books from his personal collection.[93]

With this encouraging start, the library opened its doors to the public in 1954. Its first voluntary librarian was Mrs. G. Lepsius. At the beginning of 1955, Mr. Wakefield, the Chairman of the Library Committee, reported that "the library has had a success beyond anything that could be expected."[94] It had by this date 4,800 books, one third of which belonged to St. Mark's School; 60 reference books and 3 sets of encyclopaedias; subscriptions to 30 magazines; and a membership of 1,400, about 80% of whom were school children from all the schools in Butterworth.[95]

Since its foundation, the library has had to rely entirely on voluntary contributions and donations for its existence. As a result, it was unable to give more effective service because of lack of funds.

The library possessed a collection of 8,000 books, most of which were in English, but there were also books in Malay, Chinese and Tamil. Because of lack of funds, it did not subscribe to any current periodicals. It was run by voluntary help, usually a teacher assisted by student helpers from St.Mark's School.[96]

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[91] H. Wakefield, "The Butterworth Free Library," *MLGN*, 1(2):28, October 1955.

[92] *Ibid.*

[93] *Ibid.*, p. 28–29.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[95] Manuel, p. 12.

The library occupied spacious quarters in St. Mark's School. It had seating for 50 readers, and a reference room stocked with about 1,000 books. The library was classified by Dewey and had a classified catalogue.[97]

Borrowing facilities were available free of charge to all residents of Butterworth. Most of the library's members were students, and an average of 150 books a day were issued. The library was kept open from 2.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m., Monday to Friday.[98]

D. *Malacca*

Malacca State has a total area of 640 square miles and a population of 291,211 (1957 census) of whom 55% are literate in any language. It has only one public library whose total collection slightly exceeds 12,000 volumes. Until 1960, the library was used primarily by the residents of Malacca town (population, 69,900), but in that year book box and mobile library services were inaugurated for people living in the smaller towns and rural districts of Malacca State.

THE MALACCA LIBRARY[99]

The Malacca Library was founded in 1881 as a subscription library,and has barely changed the manner of its management and organization since. As with the Penang Library, the poverty of its records makes it impossible to trace its history in any great detail. It is known that in the early years the library received a small grant of $500 from the Malacca government.[100] This was increased to $1,000 after World War II, and to $2,000 in 1956.[101]

Because of its small income the library's growth was very slow. As late as 1950, it had only between 4,000 to 5,000 books.[102] Kate Ferguson has provided us with a description of this library at that date:

> It is located in the Government buildings, the two rooms are well arranged, adequate reading space is provided. A separate section has been assigned to Junior members.... The fees collected barely pay for the running of the library.... The Government grant is spent on books which means (at the price of books in Malaya) that an average of 16 books a month are added to both sections of the library. There is no money for the rebinding of the 3,000 books which are so badly in need of repair.[103]

The library grew more rapidly after 1950 and by 1955 had increased its book stock to 10,433, an increase of more than 50% in five years.[104] This expansion had been possible because of gifts of books and money from USIS, the Malacca Rotary Club and the Sir Henry Gurney Memorial Fund.[105]

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[96] Thoh Khye Juat, *Personal Communication*, 11th March, 1962.

[97] *Ibid.*

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] The Malacca Library was renamed the Henry Gurney Memorial Library (Malacca) in 1955; but that name never stuck, and the library is still popularly known under its old name.

[100] "Malacca Annual Report 1899," *MLGN*, 1(5):92, July 1956.

[101] L.M. Harrod, "Libraries in Malaya and Singapore," *LAR*, 58:332, September 1956.

[102] Ferguson, p. 17.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[104] Henry Gurney Memorial Library (Malacca), *Annual Report, 1955.*

In 1956, the Malacca Municipality matched the State Government grant of $2,000 to the library, and has continued to support the library since.

The membership of the library then was very small relative to the total population of the State. In 1960, the number of members was only 1,459.[106] The library was recently taken over by the State Government, and has since shifted to newer quarters at the Dewan Hang Tuah.

One of the most encouraging developments in recent years has been the realization of the State Government of the importance of a library service as a corollary to its rural development programme. Evidence of this new awareness was provided by the establishment of a mobile library service by the State Government in 1960. This service was inaugurated with an initial stock of about 1,000 books, mainly in the Malay language.[107] This stock was increased to more than 2,500 books (including 300 in English) in 1961. The collection comprised books on all subjects, including "history, geography, science, politics, economics, domestic science, agriculture, folklore, and even novels, printed in romanized Malay or Jawi."[108]

This library initially visited 30 *kampongs* or villages. These had been increased to 50 by the end of 1960. The library operated five days a week from Monday to Friday, and visited every *kampong* at least once a fortnight.[109] The mobile library service proved to be so popular and so successful that the Government recently (4th February, 1962) purchased another mobile unit.

Until recently Malacca was the only state in Malaya operating a mobile library service. Selangor has since followed suit. Perhaps other states will also follow the examples of these two states once the advantages of a mobile library service operating under Malayan conditions are revealed. Travelling libraries run by urban centres appear to be a solution to the problem of providing a library service for the dispersed and thinly spread population of Malaya, the majority of whom do not have the wealth to support static or branch library services.

E. *Perak*

Perak has the largest population of all the states in the Federation—1,221,446, of whom 56% are literate. It has only one public library, which is located in its largest town Ipoh (population, 125,800) and which has a stock of 12,000 volumes.

THE IPOH LIBRARY

The Ipoh Library does not pretend to give a state-wide service, and is provided wholly from the funds of the Ipoh Town Council. There was a time in its history when it was called the Perak Library, but its name reflected the fact that it was a state-aided institution rather than that it was a library providing statewide services. The library has always been and is being used mainly by the residents of Ipoh. The Ipoh Library has only recently (July 1962) become a free public library financed entirely by the Ipoh Town Council. On its future success or failure will be determined whether public library development in Malaya will be linked with local government councils, or will be organized on a State or Federal basis as has happened in many newly developing countries.

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[105] Manuel, p. 3.
[106] Kutub Khanah Melaka, *Laporan Tahunan 1960*, p. 1. (Mimeographed).
[107] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[108] *Malay Mail*, 10th January, 1961.
[109] Kutub Khanah Melaka, *Laporan Tahunan 1960*, p. 2.

The Ipoh Library has had a varied history. It began as a subscription library in 1931 under the aegis of the Ipoh Rotary Club. It was then the "Ipoh Juvenile Library" which catered for the needs of school children and was run by voluntary helpers, mainly teachers and scouts.[110]

In 1937 at the suggestion of the late Mr. S. Rajaratnam, a prominent educationalist and school teacher, the word "juvenile" was dropped, and the library became known as the "Ipoh Library", admitting adults and children as members. The Committee which managed it was elected by members, but the Ipoh Rotarians continued to maintain a paternal interest in the library, and many of them also held office on the management committee.[111]

The library, like other libraries in Malaya, was looted during the war.[112] At the end of the war, such books and shelving as were salvaged were moved from the Town Hall room, which had hitherto housed the library, to the Public Relations Department in Brewster Road.[113] The library was apparently left more or less neglected here. Miss Ferguson reported in 1950 that it was in "very sordid quarters" and that the books were very dirty and in a dilapidated condition.[114] At this time the library had some 300 subscribing members, but these apparently did not make much use of it, for only about 600 books were being borrowed every month.[115]

Fortunately, however, after the war steps were taken to erect a new building for the library. A Committee under the energetic leadership of Dr. Wu was constituted to raise the necessary funds. By 1950 sufficient funds had been raised to begin the first stage of a two-storey building. The State Government helped by contributing $25,000 and donating the site. The Foundation stone of the building was laid in 1950, and the first-storey of the building was officially opened in 1951. Lack of funds prevented the building of the second-storey.[116]

The new building gave the library a new lease of life. It was renamed the Perak Library because the Committee hoped that it would be able to provide a state-wide service.[117] The promise of the library to provide a service for all the inhabitants of Perak State induced the State Government to make a grant of $1,000 annually to the library.[118]

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[110] R. Kesselring, "The Perak Library," *MLGN*, 2(1):7, July 1957.

[111] Neoh Thean Chye, "The Perak Library," *History of English Schools in Perak*, compiled by E.C. Hicks (Ipoh: Perak Library, 1958), p. 1.

[112] Syed Zaharuddin bin Syed Hassan, State Secretary of Perak, "Text of a Speech to the P.P.P.T.M. on 2nd December, 1961."

[113] Neoh, p. 1.

[114] Ferguson, p. 4.

[115] *Ibid.*

[116] Neoh, p. 2.

The library received much valuable assistance in the initial stages. It received donations of books from various individuals and organizations, notably the USIS, the British Council and the Rotary Club of Ipoh. A Tamil collection was also purchased from a donation of $4,000 raised by Tamil school teachers. This was the first time that vernacular literature was represented in the library's collection. Since then the library's accessions have also included Malay books.[119]

By 1955, the library had grown into a collection of 10,000 books, of which 3,000 represented books in Malay and Tamil. It had 476 adults and 250 children among its members, who paid subscriptions varying from $100 for life membership to $12.00 per annum for a "Senior" membership and $5.00 for a "Junior" membership.[120]

In 1957, a second-storey was added with the aid of a State Government donation of $20,000 and an interest free loan of another $20,000.[121]

From this date on, the familiar fate of all Malaya's subscription libraries was repeated. The passage of time witnessed an increasing rise in expenditure aggravated by falling income, the deterioration of the book stock, and the falling off in the membership. In 1959, the library was in serious financial difficulties.[122] Consequently, an approach was made to the State Government to increase its annual grant to $5,000 or failing that to take over the running of the library.[123] But the Government proved unwilling to do either of these. As an emergency measure, it raised its grant for 1960 to $2,000, but stipulated that two nominees of the Government should sit on the Committee of Management.[124]

As expected the additional Government grant was not enough to rescue the library from its financial troubles, and at the end of 1960 the library was even worse off than before.[125] At this critical juncture, the Ipoh Town Council was persuaded to take over the institution. The Perak Government viewed this move with approval and agreed to write off the library's debt of $20,000 which had been loaned to the institution by the Government in 1957 to help it build the second-storey of the building.[126]

It speaks much for the vision of the men on the Ipoh Town Council that they decided not only to assume full responsibility for the running of the library, but also to run it as a free public library. Once this decision had been made, the Council moved with characteristic energy. It closed the library temporarily and set about redecorating and refurnishing it at a cost of $15,000. At the same time, it appointed a trained and experienced librarian, Mrs. J.L Lawry, to re-organize the library.[127]

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[117] Kesselring, *MLGN*, 2(1):7, July 1957.
[118] Manuel, p. 3.
[119] Neoh, p. 2.
[120] Manuel, p. 3.
[121] Neoh, p. 2.
[122] Perak Library, *Annual Report, 1959*
[123] *Ibid.*
[124] Perak Library, *Annual Report, 1960.*
[125] *Ibid.*
[126] J.J. Miranda, "Ipoh Library," *MLJ*, 2(1):56, October 1961.

Provided with an initial grant of $5,000 to purchase new equipment, and $10,000 to stock the library with new books, Mrs. Lawry did a magnificent job within a short space of time. She discarded large numbers of old and worn-out books, and rebound those worth salvaging; stocked the library with a good collection of reference and technical books in addition to works of fiction and literature; purchased new shelving and other library equipment; reclassified the library according to the Dewey Decimal Classification, and introduced a dictionary catalogue on cards.[128]

The Ipoh Library has been functioning as a free library since July 1st, 1962. Members are required to pay a deposit, but this is refundable. What is more important is the fact that the library is assured of the continued support of the Ipoh Town Council. As the then Chairman of the Ipoh Town Council, Mr. E.G. Waller, has remarked

> Ipoh Town Council accepts the fact that a public library is a service to be provided out of the rate, and it is providing both now and in the future, for considerable recurrent expenditure with only nominal return by way of deposits and fees designed more as a method of membership control than as a source of revenue.[129]

F. *Johore*

Johore is one of the largest states in the Federation, with a total population of 926,850 and a literacy figure of 53%. Of the dozen or so towns in Johore, with a population of 10,000 and over, Johore Bahru (population 75,100) Batu Pahat (population 40,000), Muar (population 39,100) and Segamat (population 18,500) have small public libraries, most of which charge subscriptions and have book stocks of less than 5,000.

JOHORE BAHRU

Until a few years ago, Johore Bahru could boast only one small subscription library, although it is the capital of the State of Johore. This was the International Library. No statistics regarding membership and book stock were available. The library received a Government grant of $1,200 per annum.[130]

This library has since been superseded by a new public library, the Perpustakaan Sultan Ismail, which was officially opened in October 1964, with an initial collection of 4,000 volumes. The new library is situated in the civic centre of the town and is an attractive two-storied building with a slightly tilted Malaysian style roof. The project was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Johore Bahru under the chairmanship of Dato Abdullah bin Mohammed, the President of the Johore Bahru Town Council.[131]

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[127] *Ibid.*, p. 56. A graduate of McGill Library School (1938), Mrs. Lawry, the wife of an Ipoh businessman, has had a varied career as a librarian, having served with the Sun Life Assurance Company in Montreal; the Canadian Legion Educational Services; the Canadian High Commissioner's Office in Wellington, N.Z.; Department of External Territories, Rabaul, New Guinea; the U.K. High Commissioner's Office in Colombo, Ceylon; and the Raffles Library, Singapore.

[128] J.L. Lawry, *Personal Communication, n.d.*

[129] E.G. Waller, "Text of a Speech to the P.P.P.T.M., 2nd December, 1961."

[130] Ferguson, p. 13.

BATU PAHAT

The Batu Pahat Public library was officially opened on 17th September, 1955. It receives an annual grant from the State Government and is managed by a Committee elected by members. Adults pay a subscription of $6.00 and junior members, $3.00 per annum. The library has a book stock of slightly over 3,000 and a membership of less than 400. There are books in English, Chinese and Malay, which are at present housed in a temporary building.[132]

MUAR

Muar has a number of reading rooms, but only one library can be claimed to be "public". This is the Muar Book Club, which charges a subscription and possesses a book stock of about 1,100.[133]

SEGAMAT

The Segamat Public Library has an estimated book stock of 5,000. It receives a State grant and charges a subscription of $24.00 per annum for a first class membership; $12.00 for second class; and $6.00 for junior. The library has received gifts of books and periodicals from the BritishCouncil.[134] Its present building was built in 1952 from public subscription and State Government contribution.[135]

G. *Negri Sembilan*

Negri Sembilan has a population of 364,524, of whom 60% are literate. The state has four public libraries, three of which are in its capital, Seremban (population 52,000). These are the Gurney Memorial Library, Seremban, built in 1952 and with a current book stock of slightly over 2,000,[136] the Seremban International Public Library (1,000 books),[137] and the Seremban Chinese Reading Circle (5,000 volumes).[138] All these libraries charge subscriptions, but only the Gurney Memorial Library receives a small State grant. The only public library outside Seremban, is the Gurney Memorial Library, Rembau (1,000 volumes), which is a free library. Rembau has a population of less than 1,000.[139]

H. *Kedah*

Kedah has a population of 701,964, of whom 43% are literate. Its only

[131] P. Lim, "Johore Bahru," *MLJ*, 1(2):25, January 1961.

[132] Batu Pahat Public Library, *First Annual Report, 23rd October 1955–31st October 1956.*

[133] Manuel, p. 5.

[134] *Ibid.*

[135] Harrod, *LAR*, 58:332, September 1956.

[136] *Ibid.*

[137] Ferguson, p. 19.

[138] *Ibid.*

[139] Harrod, *LAR*, 58:332, September 1956.

public library is situated in its capital, Alor Star (population 60,000). This library was officially opened in 1961. It is under the control of the Alor Star Town Council, but unfortunately is a subscription library. The library has a stock of about 4,000 books in English and Malay, and subscribes to 15 magazines and 9 newspapers. It is classified by Dewey, and has a dictionary catalogue on cards.[140]

I. *Kelantan*

Kelantan with a population of 505,522 has the lowest literacy rate of all the States in the Federation, this being 27% of the total population. Yet curiously enough, it has the earliest free public library in Malaya on record. This library located in its capital, Kota Bharu (population 38,103), is called the Kota Bharu Carnegie Library in recognition of the grant of $8,500 made by the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1938 towards the cost of the building.[141] The library was under the charge of the Chief Education Officer of Kelantan, and received a small State grant annually. Its book stock in 1961 was about 2,000.[142] No figures about membership or the use of the library are available.

J. *Perlis*

Perlis, with a total population of 90,995, has a literacy rate of 44%. It has only one public library, which is in Kangar (population 6,064). The library charges subscriptions and its book stock is estimated at slightly over 1,000.[143]

K. *Pahang*

Pahang (population 313,058) has a literacy rate of 49% and one public library in its major town, Kuantan (population 23,100). This is a subscription library and has about 1,000 books.[144]

L. *Trengganu*

Trengganu (population 278,269) has a literacy rate of 30%. Its major town Kuala Trengganu (population 29,400) possesses a subscription library (1,000 volumes).[145]

M. *The Libraries of the Malayan Public Library Association*

In the above survey of the public libraries of Malaya, we have deliberately excluded the libraries of the Malayan Public Library Association. There is actually no need to dwell at length on these libraries, since they are likely to whither away now that the M.P.L.A. is unable to continue with its work due to lack of funds.

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[140] Mansor bin Zain, Secretary, Town Council, Alor Star, *Personal Communication*, 12th November, 1962.

[141] Ferguson, p. 11.

[142] *World of Learning, 1960/61* (London: Europa, 1961), p. 691.

[143] Manuel, p. 6.

[144] *Ibid.*

[145] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

In 1961, there were about 150 Chinese libraries and 90 Malay libraries existing in most of the States, principally in the new villages. Most of them had stocks of less than 1,000 books comprising between 200 to 300 titles. Some of the larger libraries, known as Central Libraries, were located in the major towns of Malaya, and were intended to provide help to the smaller village libraries. The largest Central Library, located in Kuala Lumpur, was also the headquarters library, and had a stock of more than 50,000 volumes. All the libraries are neglected and in a bad condition.

N. *Summary*

Public library services in the Federation of Malaya are certainly far from adequate. Excluding the libraries of the Malayan Public Library Association, there are only twenty-two public libraries which serve fifteen of the thirty-six towns in Malaya with population of 10,000 or more. Nine of these libraries are located in five towns—Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Malacca, Klang and Penang, which are the only towns served by libraries with 10,000 volumes or more. The total book stock of these nine libraries is estimated to be 255,900 volumes.

Five other libraries, whose collections range from 1,000 to 8,000 volumes, are located in three towns—Butterworth, Seremban and Segamat—which have a total population of about 113,000.

The other eight libraries are located in Rembau, Kuantan, Kuala Trengganu, Kangar, Johore Bahru, Muar, and Kota Bharu, all of whom have less than 2,000 volumes.

Of the twenty-two libraries, only the libraries of USIS, the British Council, Ipoh, Rembau and Butterworth are free. The rest charge subscriptions and receive grants from State or municipal government funds. Generally speaking, the income derived from subscription and from public sources is so small as to prevent (*a*) the purchase of an adequate number of books; (*b*) the improvement of the condition of the stock through rebinding; (*c*) the purchase of books other than those of a popular and recreative nature; and (*d*) the appointment of qualified staff to promote better library services.

If the library services in the major towns are inadequate, they are even worse in the smaller towns, many of which have no public libraries at all and have to rely on makeshift libraries provided by recreational clubs, associations or religious organizations, with stocks varying from a few hundred upwards.

The rural areas are even more poorly served. Some libraries, such as the Kuala Lumpur Book Club, the Malacca Library, the Klang Gurney Memorial Library, the Penang Library, the USIS libraries and the British Council Library, provide services to communities outside the town areas. The most common method is to send boxes of books to institutions, such as schools and youth clubs. Sometimes books are sent by mail. Only the Malacca Library and the Selangor State Government operate mobile library services.

CHAPTER IV

A HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN SINGAPORE

A. *Introductory*

The State of Singapore covers an area of only 225 square miles. In this small area lives a cosmopolitan population of one-and-a-half million, of whom 75.4% are Chinese, 13.6% Malays 8.6% Indians and Pakistanis, and 2.4% Europeans, Eurasians, Ceylonese and others. Of the 963,105 persons, 10 years of age and over at the time of the 1957 census, 503,305 were literate. Of these 201,947 were literate in English and 257,482 in Chinese. The literacy rate can be expected to be higher to-day.

Singapore is more fortunate than the Federation in the provision of public library services. In fact, in Singapore there may be said to exist a free public library service in the true sense of the term. Public library services are provided by (*a*) the National Library, which performs the dual function of a national library and a public library and serves every corner of Singapore with branch and mobile libraries; and (*b*) the USIS library, Singapore.

B. *The National Library*

The National Library has had a long and varied history. Beginning as a small school library, it has grown like a seedling into a mighty tree with spreading branches providing intellectual nourishment for the people of Singapore. For convenience we shall divide its history into four major periods: (i) 1823–44, when it was a school library; (ii) 1844–74, when it was a proprietary library; (iii) 1874–1958, when it was a government library; and (iv) since 1958, when it became a national library.

THE SINGAPORE INSTITUTION LIBRARY, 1823–44

The Singapore Institution was founded in 1823 by Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore, who intended it to be an institution of higher learning, one of whose objects was "to collect the scattered literature and traditions of the country."[1] But Raffles' successors were less far-sighted, and took no interest in the Institution, so that after various vicissitudes, it was eventually converted into a secondary school, which still exists to-day under the name of Raffles Institution.

From the beginning the library had pride of place in the Singapore Institution, and for many years provided the only public library service for the residents of Singapore. Between 1823 and 1844, the library was available for use to "all subscribers and donors to the Institution, and the teachers and scholars therein" as well as any other person "upon a monthly payment to the Librarian of 25 cents."[2]

[1] R. Hanitsch, "Raffles Library and Museum," *One Hundred Years of Singapore... ed.* W. Makepeace, G.E. Brooke, Roland St. J. Braddell (London: Murray, 1921), I, p. 520.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 522.

Compared with the library founded in the older settlement of Penang, the Singapore Institution library was a dwarf. Such a state of affairs could not last indefinitely. A great deal of rivalry existed between Penang and Singapore, and indeed the Governor of Penang had endeavoured to stop Raffles from establishing a settlement in Singapore. But by the 1840's Singapore had eclipsed Penang both in terms of trade and population, and besides had been chosen as the "most eligible centre of government" when the Straits Settlements had been incorporated in 1826.[3] Considering all these circumstances, it was obviously far too demeaning that Singapore should only have a small school library.

THE SINGAPORE LIBRARY, 1844–74

In 1844, a public meeting was held to consider the establishment of a public library in Singapore. The meeting unanimously resolved that such an institution, to be known as the Singapore Library, should be set up.[4] The Headmaster of the Singapore Institution, Mr. J.C. Smith, agreed to act as Secretary and Librarian as well as to lend the books of the Singapore Institution to the new library for as long a period as the latter was housed in the Singapore Institution.[5]

The Singapore Library was a proprietary library, a type of library which was particularly widespread in all the colonies of the British. Notable examples existed in the early American and Australian colonies. It was quite natural that the British should have merely transplanted known social institutions existing in their own country to territories where they settled.

In their purest form, according to Jesse Shera,

> proprietary libraries were common-law partnerships; based on the joint-stock principle; they involved ownership of shares in the property of the group. Such shares were transferable by sale, gift, or bequest.[6]

Ownership of a share entitled the holder the right to use the books of the institution, but title to the property was retained by the group. In practice, however, there were some variations from the classical type of proprietary library. Thus, again quoting Shera,

> it early became the practice of proprietary libraries to permit non-proprietor use of books by those annually paying a stipulated fee, while the proprietors were themselves frequently subject to annual assessments or 'taxes' on the shares of stock which, if not paid, resulted in forfeiture of library privileges.[7]

In theory, a proprietor could own as many shares as he liked, which of course gave him greater voting strength and consequently more control over the management of the library; in practice, proprietors were seldom allowed to buy more than one share each.

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[3] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959* (Singapore: Govt. Printing Office, 1961), p. 27.

[4] C.B. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore...* (Singapore: Fraser & Neave, 1902), II, p. 419.

[5] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 524.

[6] J. Shera, *Foundations of the Public Library: the Origin of the Public Library Movement in New England, 1629–1855* ("University of Chicago, Studies in Library Science"; Chicago: University Press, 1949), p. 58.

[7] *Ibid.*

The Singapore Library reflected all these variations in practice. According to its original rules,[8] the founders of the library and those who applied for admission within a month of its foundation were allowed to become proprietors on the purchase of a share costing thirty dollars. Other persons who might at a later date wish to become proprietors were balloted for at a general meeting of shareholders, and had to pay such entrance fee as was to be decided annually at the general meeting of shareholders. All proprietors had to contribute a monthly sum of $2.50 to the funds of the library to meet current outlay.[9] The proprietors constituted Class I of the library's members.

In order to permit non-proprietors to make use of the library's facilities, the rules provided for two additional classes of members: Classes II and III. Class II comprised residents who did not wish to become proprietors, but who could make use of the library's facilities on payment of a monthly subscription of $2.50, while Class III consisted of temporary residents or visitors, who having obtained the guarantee of a resident subscriber were permitted to borrow books on payment of the same monthly subscription as those in Class II. Needless to say, the subscribers of Classes II and III not being proprietors had no say in the running of the library and could not vote at general meetings. Their subscriptions merely enabled them to have the privilege of borrowing books, but did not give them title to the property which was lodged with the proprietors.

The Singapore Library was controlled by a Management Committee elected annually by the proprietors. The first Committee comprised the following:[10]

President : The Hon. Colonel J. Butterworth, C.B., Governor of the Straits Settlements.
Vice-President : The Hon. T. Church, Resident Councillor.
Secretary and Librarian: Mr. J.C. Smith.
Treasurer : Mr. W.H. Read.
Committee Members : W. Napier, L. Fraser, R. McEwen, A. Logan, C.A. Dyce, H.C. Caldwell.

From the make up of the first Committee, it is easy to believe that the list of the library's thirty-two proprietors was a veritable social register.[11] As in the case of the Penang Library, the Secretary-Librarian initially served in an honorary capacity, but he was assisted by a paid employee, who was responsible for all routine records and was frequently called the librarian. In 1853, as the duties of the Secretary-Librarian increased, Mr. Smith was allowed to charge a commission of 5% on all the subscriptions collected.[12]

The Singapore Library was officially opened on 22nd January, 1845, with an initial stock of 617 books worth £200 sterling. Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co. were appointed the London Agents of the library with a standing order to despatch new publications up to £10 every month.[13]

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[8] The rules were published in the *Singapore Free Press*, 15th August, 1844.
[9] This was reduced to $2.00 in 1846.
[10] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 524.
[11] A list of the members is given in Buckley, II, p. 419.
[12] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 540.

The library was obviously a source of pride to the European community as the following contemporary account indicates:

> ...the library has been in operation for some time past, and...scanty as are its stores, the increasing numbers of those wishing to avail themselves of its benefits, augurs well for the intellectual and moral habits of the European portion of the community.[14]

It adds that "the constant supply of new intellectual food which every mail brings" keeps the sojourner in the Straits Settlements "almost on par with those at home as regards the literature and science of the passing day."[15]

In 1849, the presentation of two ancient gold coins from His Highness the Sri Maharaja, the Temenggong (or Minister of Police) of Johore, to the library stimulated discussion about the formation of a Museum "tending to the elucidation of Malayan History."[16]

At the Annual General Meeting held a few days later (31st January, 1849), the proprietors resolved

> that a Museum with a view principally to the collection of objects illustrating the General History and Archaeology of Singapore and the Eastern Archipelago be established in connection with the Singapore Library; that it be called the 'Singapore Library Museum' and that it be deposited in the rooms of the Library.[17]

The Museum was launched with the two gold coins forming the nucleus of its collection. The following year, it was reported that "the Museum is now a most valuable addition to the Library, and doubtless so esteemed by its visitors, who are thus further attracted to it by a medium so interesting."[18] Unfortunately, however, there are very few clues as to what sort of collection the Museum contained at that time. After some initial enthusiasm, the Museum appears to have been neglected, and after 1864, no mention of it is made in any of the library's records.

In the meanwhile, the library continued to flourish. In 1849, it was moved from its quarters in the Singapore Institution to larger premises in the Town Hall. The number of books increased steadily, although during the Napoleonic wars, the library experienced great difficulty in getting its regular supply of books from England. Then in 1862, the bombshell came. The library was discovered to be in debt. How surprising this discovery was, can be gathered from the following letter of the then Secretary-Librarian, Dr. Scott, who had succeeded Mr. J.C. Smith, to the library's Agents in London:

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[13] *Ibid.*, p. 528.

[14] Buckley, II, p. 442.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] W.J. Butterworth, Governor of S.S., *Letter to Management Committee of the Singapore Library*, 29th January, 1849.

[17] Buckley, II, p. 500.

[18] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 536.

> The Treasurer of the Library and I were very greatly and most disagreeably surprised to learn that the late Secretary (Mr. J.C. Smith) had an account against the Library amounting to nearly £70! This came like a thunderclap on the Committee, who, with us, imagined the Library free from debt. It was this belief alone that induced me to extend my order of books, periodicals, and papers to £12 monthly, whereas we find that the subscription will barely cover £10 worth monthly. I beg your particular attention to this, after receipt of which your monthly bill must not exceed £10 till further orders.[19]

Despite its debt, the library struggled to maintain its solvency and independence for the next ten years. But it never managed to shake off its debts, and in 1873 when there was a move to establish a government library and museum in Singapore, the proprietors thankfully relinquished their property to the Government. At that date, the library had 3,000 books.

THE RAFFLES LIBRARY AND MUSEUM, 1874–1957

The decision to establish a Government library and museum arose directly from a suggestion made by Dr. H.L. Randell in 1873 on behalf of the local community that the government should establish a museum to collect "objects of Natural History" of the Malay Peninsula and the surrounding islands of the Malay archipelago.[20]

Dr. Randell's suggestion came at a propitious moment because at that time, the Government was considering what steps should be taken to give effect to the resolution of the Legislative Council passed in June, 1873, that the Straits Settlements should participate in the Permanent Exhibition of Colonial Products, which would be housed in the Exhibition Building at South Kensington, England, by sending not only commercial products, but also objects illustrating the ethnology, antiquities, natural history, and physical character of the country.[21] A museum would obviously help by contributing the necessary material.

Sir Andrew Clarke who had succeeded Sir Harry Ord as Governor of the Straits Settlements in November 1873, not only agreed to the idea of a museum, but also suggested that it be combined with a public library.[22]

If the Straits Settlements had still been under the control of the East India Company, Sir Andrew's assent would undoubtedly have been frowned upon, for the East India Company had been interested only in keeping expenditure in the Straits Settlements down to the minimum. It had been this policy which had been partly responsible for the agitation that had ultimately led to the transfer of the Straits Settlements from the control of the East India Company to the Colonial Office in 1867.

Sir Andrew Clarke, the second colonial governor, came at a time when change and reform were expected of the Government by the vocal European community. Unlike Ord, who had been very unpopular, Sir Andrew was a

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 541.
[20] H.L. Randell, *Letter to the Colonial Secretary, Straits Settlements*, 8th December, 1873.
[21] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 542.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 543.

man who had his finger on the pulse of the community as is testified by his dramatic breach of the traditional non-intervention policy of the British in the affairs of the Malay States in 1873.

Obviously sensing the need for both a library and a museum in the Straits Settlements, which the moribund Singapore Library had been unable to meet, Sir Andrew appointed in April 1874 a Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. R. Little to consider what steps should be taken to establish a museum and library.[23] As a preliminary step the Committee suggested that the Government should appoint a "Permanent Secretary" to take charge of the proposed library and museum. This was approved, and Mr. James Collins was appointed on 8th May, 1874.[24] With regard to the establishment of a library, the Committee suggested that the Government should take over the indebted Singapore Library, on the ground that it would form a valuable nucleus for the collection. The Committee pointed out that negotiations with the proprietors of the Singapore Library had shown that they were willing to transfer their rights to the Government, if the latter would meet the debts of the library and make each proprietor a life member of the proposed public library.[25] Upon the Government agreeing to the conditions laid down by the proprietors, the library was formally transferred to it on 1st July, 1874.[26]

Scant attention appears to have been paid to the formation of the Museum although its establishment had been the original motive for the setting up of the Committee. However, a small beginning was made with a collection of woods presented by Mr. J. Meldrum, a collection of stone adzes, arrows and other weapons from New Guinea purchased from the sailors of H.M.S. Basilisk, and some enthnological specimens from Borneo.[27] The Library and Museum were opened to the public in September, 1874, as the Raffles Library and Museum.[28]

The institution was formally constituted as a Government department on 16th December, 1878, with the passing of the Raffles Societies Ordinance (Ordinance VII of 1878), whereby the management of the Raffles Library and Museum was confided to a Committee appointed by the Governor.[29] The chief executive of the Library and Museum bore the title of Curator and Librarian, Raffles Library and Museum, and also served as Secretary to the Management Committee. The title was changed to Director, Raffles Library and Museum, in 1908.[30]

For the sake of convenience, we shall divide the history of the Raffles Library and Museum into four major periods: (*a*) 1874–1919; (*b*) 1920–39; (*c*) 1939–45; (*d*) 1945–57.

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[23] *Ibid.*, p. 543.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 544.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 545.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 548.

[28] The Committee under Dr. Little's chairmanship had originally resolved on 18th June, 1874, that the Institution should be known as the Singapore Library and Museum rather than the alternative name of Raffles Library and Museum. But in deference to Sir Andrew Clarke's expressed wish, they reversed their decision.

[29] *Laws of the Straits Settlements...* (rev. ed; London, 1920), V, ord. no. 177.

[30] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1908.*

1874–1919: The Period of Neglect. The founders of the Raffles Library and Museum wanted the library to develop into something more than a mere circulation library. This is obvious from the way the library was organized. It was divided into three sections: a Reference Library, a Reading Room and a Lending Library. The Reference Library and Reading Room were open free to the public, and it was intended to build the Reference Library into a collection of "valuable works relating to the Straits Settlements and surrounding countries, as well as standard works on Botany, Zoology, Mineralogy, Geography and the Arts and Sciences generally."[31]

The Lending Library, however, was run on more commercial lines, the intention being that it should pay its own way through membership subscription. The addition of a Lending Library charging subscriptions was undoubtedly a mistake because in later years this led to the neglect of the Reference Library, for the Directors of the Library and Museum found that they had to put the needs of the subscribers to the Lending Library in the forefront.

G.D. Haviland, who was Curator and Librarian in 1893, was the first man to really examine seriously the aims of the Raffles Library and Museum and to reach the conclusion that the aims of a Lending Library were incompatible with those of the institution. In his opinion

> the narrower interests of Singapore residents, centred in the Lending Library are in great part antagonistic to the broader Rafflesian interests of a Public Museum and Library for the benefit of all who make use of Singapore as a commercial centre.[32]

He also added that

> To combine a Reference Library and a Lending Library may economise in the purchase of books, but it increases the cost of caring for them. A Lending Library is best worked on thoroughly commercial principles; its aims should be (1) to pay its way; (2) to satisfy the present wishes of its subscribers. A public Reference Library and Museum should especially aim at facilitating public instruction and information, by providing for reference what it is important the public should be able to refer to; but which would not pay commercial enterprise to provide, from the difficulty of treating knowledge as measurable commercial goods, and other reasons.[33]

His views were to a large extent echoed by his successor, Dr. R. Hanitsch, who was Director from 1895 to 1919. Dr. Hanitsch recommended that all the novels in the Lending Library should be handed over to a local bookseller so that the Raffles Library could be developed into a "true Reference Library."[34] He even advocated that the books of such a Reference Library should be lent free to the inhabitants of the Straits Settlements on proper guarantees being received.[35]

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[31] Hanitsch, *One Hundred Years...*, I, p. 546.

[32] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1893.*

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1895.*

[35] *Ibid.*

It is a debatable point whether the development of a free public library service in Singapore would have been accelerated if the Government had listened to the suggestions of Haviland and Hanitsch. But it never paid attention to these recommendations, for it undoubtedly found the subscriptions a useful if not entirely profitable source of income. Thus with the passage of years, the Raffles Library developed increasingly into a commercial lending library, although it never completely lost its identity as a reference collection also.

Another problem which seems to have plagued the early Directors was the association of the library with the museum. Mr. Haviland petulantly stated in 1893 that a single European could not "do the works of Librarian and of Curator to the Museum, except when both Library and Museum are small and limited..."[36] This may explain why he resigned from office after only one year's service.

Dr. Hanitsch apparently agreed with him, for he also stated that

> the Library (i.e. chiefly Lending Library)...on the present principles must always be a great strain on the time and energy of the Curator, and can hardly be regarded as tending towards the welfare of the institution financially and otherwise.[37]

It is generally recognized to-day that the association of a public library with a museum under one administration is not always a good thing, for the simple reason that each activity demands different knowledge and skills, and unless each section is placed under the control of a person who is qualified and experienced in the required skill, and has equal power and authority, one is likely to flourish at the expense of the other. This even happens when there is one committee responsible for both activities as was the case with the Raffles Library and Museum.

Throughout the history of the Library and Museum we may discern this conflict of interests. In 1920, Sir John Bucknill, then Chairman of the Raffles Library and Museum Committee, voiced the opinion that

> Personally I think that the Museum and the Library will, in time, become separate institutions.... I am not at all sure that a Committee of persons suitable for the Museum Committee is, necessarily composed of persons suited to be a Committee for a Library.[38]

SiriJohn's prediction was destined to come true thirty five years later when in 1955 the Raffles Library was separated administratively from the Museum.

There is no doubt that the library would not have been neglected the way it was if this separation had been effected earlier. Until 1919, the library was run by unqualified staff, under the general supervision of the Director of the Institution. The Director, however, was invariably appointed more for his skill as a Curator than as a Librarian. With the possible exception of Dr. R. Hanitsch, none of the early Directors were particularly interested in the welfare of the library, which they considered a millstone around their neck. They were thus interested in running the library as cheaply as possible, in providing the minimum of service, and in stocking it with sufficient fiction to satisfy the more vocal section of the library's users—its subscribers. Such books as were added to the Reference Library were mainly of the type which would be of aid to the work of the Museum.

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[36] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1893.*
[37] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1895.*
[38] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1920.*

It is not surprising therefore that the library's book stock expanded very slowly. There were several methods by which the library added to its stock of books. Firstly, there were the regular annual purchases consisting principally of fiction for the Lending Library which amounted to approximately 20% of the total expenditure of the library and museum between the years 1874 and 1919. Until 1891, these regular purchases were made by placing a standing order with the Library's agents in London to send all new publications up to a specified amount. After this date, the Committee decided that it ought to have a greater say in book selection, and resolved that every new title ordered had first to be approved by it.[39]

In addition to regular purchases, the library sometimes acquired important collections with the aid of supplementary government grants. Thus the philological library of J.R. Logan, comprising works dealing with the languages of the Malay archipelago, was obtained in 1879 in this way.[40] Similarly, in 1897, the library acquired a portion of the private library of the late Dr. Reinhold Rost, Librarian to the India Office. This numbered about 970 volumes and comprised philological works dealing with over seventy different languages and dialects of the East, and scientific works treating chiefly of the geography and ethnology of the Malay archipelago.[41]

Apart from purchases, the library frequently received donations from various institutions and individuals. Among its notable donors have been the British Museum, the Library of Congress and the Public Library of Victoria.

Another source of acquisition arose from the fact that the Raffles Library was the official depository of all the publications of the Straits Settlements. Legislative authority for this was derived from the Book Registration Ordinance of 1886, which was passed "to regulate the printing and publication of Papers and Books and to provide for the preservation of copies of Books."[42] The Ordinance provided that three copies of every "book"[43] printed in the Straits Settlements should be delivered free of charge by the printer to the Government. With regard to the disposal of these three copies, it directed that one copy should be transmitted to the Trustees of the British Museum, another to be disposed of as the Governor in Council directed, and the third copy, after having been registered in the appropriate book, to be "deposited in such public library in the Colony, or be otherwise disposed of," as the Governor directed.[44] Although the Ordinance did not apply to government publications, the Straits Government always deposited its official gazettes, blue books, government reports and other official documents in the library. These were later to form the nucleus of an archives section, established in 1938. But before that date, the publications deposited by the Government remained in the stores, largely neglected and unused, because no attempts were made to catalogue or classify them.[45]

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[39] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1893.*

[40] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1879.*

[41] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1897.*

[42] *Laws of the Straits Settlements*... (rev. ed; London, 1920) I, ord. no. 2 (Printers and Publishers).

[43] A "book" as defined in the Ordinance, "includes every volume, part or division of a volume, pamphlet, newspaper, sheet of music, map, chart, or plan separately produced; but does not include price lists, annual reports, trade circulars, trade advertisements, or other legal or business documents."

It can be seen that a great deal of the library's stock was acquired by means other than purchase. Until 1919, annual additions by purchase were less than 1,000 volumes. The library began in 1874 with a stock of 3,000 volumes, most of which originally belonged to the Singapore Library. In 1893, this number had been increased to 18,500 of which works of fiction formed one-third, with works of history, biography and travel making up another third. The rest constituted the Reference Library.[46] The library grew rather slowly, and in 1919 had slightly more than 35,000 volumes. About 7,500 volumes were in the Reference Library, the rest being in the Lending Library. The major part of the Lending Library was made up of fiction (7,600 vols.), biography (2,800 vols.), history and travels (7,300 vols.), belles-lettres, essays, drama and poetry (3,100 vols.).[47]

The slow growth of the library, in terms of book stock, was not entirely due to the neglect of the Directors. Financially, the library was run on a shoestring, having to rely on small government grants and on subscriptions from a small membership for its existence.

The government grants were meant to maintain both the library and the museum, and were as follows in the period between 1875 and 1919:[48]

1875	$8,470.92
1876–1886	$6,600.00
1887–1889	$10,000.00
1890–1898	$9,000.00
1899–1900	$4,255.00
1901	$4,755.00
1902–1903	$7,400.00
1904–1912	$10,000.00
1913–1919	$12,000.00

The grant was reduced to $4,255 in 1899 because the Director's post was put on the permanent establishment of the colony, so that his salary was no

[44] *Laws of the Straits Settlements...*, I, ord. no. 2, sec. 10.

[45] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1938.*

[46] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1893.*

[47] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1921.*

[48] Information culled from *Annual Reports* of the Raffles Library and Museum, 1875–1919.

longer paid from departmental funds but direct by the Treasury. However, this sum proved to be ridiculously low, and the amount was gradually increased until it stood at $12,000 in 1919. Even this amount was inadequate as can be seen from the fact that in the same year more than $10,000 was paid out in salaries to staff of the museum and library (excluding the salary of the Director). Thus only a pittance was left for direct museum and library purchases.[49]

Another important source of income was from subscriptions of the members. These subscriptions, however, never amounted to very much, although they helped to keep the library solvent. Throughout the nineteenth century, they never even exceeded $2,000 and in fact were less than $1,000 in 1876, 1888 and 1892.[50] The money collected from subscriptions rose somewhat at the turn of the century reaching $3,921 in 1919. [51]

The library's membership was divided into various classes, and membership subscriptions varied according to the number of books and periodicals which members were permitted to borrow at a time. Originally, there were only two classes of subscribers, I and II, and the nine proprietors of the former Singapore Library who were given Class I privileges for life.[52] A third class subscription was introduced in 1904. Most of the library's members were Singapore residents, although people living outside Singapore were permitted to join as outstation members as early as 1875.[53] Not many outstation people took advantage of this privilege partly because of the difficulties involved in the early years of transporting books to and from Singapore, and partly because of the reluctance of any person to accept the responsibility of seeing that the outstation members in his territory returned their books. Perhaps, too, the existence of libraries in Penang, Malacca, and Kuala Lumpur, was responsible for the small number of outstation members. In 1918, there were only 32 outstation members out of a total of 555 members.[54]

The rates of subscription in force between 1874 and 1919 were as follows:[55]

Year	*Class I*	*Class II*	*Class III*
1874–1887	$20	$5	–
1888–1893	$5	$3	–
1894–1900	$10	$4	–
1901	$12	$4	–
1902–1903	$12	$8	–
1904–1919	$12	$8	$4

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[49] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1919.*

[50] See the *Annual Reports* for the relevant years.

[51] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1919.*

[52] The library's last proprietor, the Honourable T. Shelford, C.M.G. died in 1899.—Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1899.*

[53] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1875.*

[54] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1918.*

[55] Information culled from relevant *Annual Reports* of the Library.

A third class subscription was added in 1904 because of the falling off in membership caused by the rise in the Class I subscription from $10 to $12 in 1901, and of the Class II subscription from $4 to $8 in 1902. Under the new scheme introduced in 1904, Class I subscribers were entitled to four books at a time, Class II to two books, and Class III to one book.

Between 1874 and 1919, the number of subscribers to the library was not high as the following five yearly sampling illustrates:[56]

Year	*No. of Subscribers*
1874	102
1879	206
1884	310
1889	280
1894	202
1899	349
1904	311
1909	384
1914	388
1919	589

The membership was largely European during this period. Illiteracy and the high subscription rates were among the reasons for the small number of local members.

On the whole, the growth of the library during the period 1874–1919 was very slow both in terms of its membership and book stock. This was largely due to inadequate funds and the lack of interest in the development of the library on the part of the Directors. However, the growth was sufficiently great to warrant the construction of a new building for the library and museum in 1887.[57] This building with various extensions remained the home of the library and museum until 1960, when the library was moved to its present building, leaving the old group of buildings to the museum.

1920–39: The Period of Modernization. This period saw the continued growth of the library, which although still far from satisfactory, was greater than that of the previous period. The adult membership of the library increased from 614 in 1920 to 3,544 in 1939. Accordingly, the revenue from subscriptions increased from $4,270 to $14,184 for the corresponding period. Annual Government grants to the library and museum also increased from $15,000 in 1920 to about $26,000 in 1939.[58] Annual purchases of books were very small, and averaged less than 2,000 volumes. Fiction as usual constituted the major part of the books added to the library.

This period was significant for four things: (*a*) the appointment of a qualified librarian for the first time in the library's history; (*b*) the formation of a junior library; (*c*) the increasing use of the library by non-Europeans; and (*d*) the establishment of an archives section.

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[56] Information culled from relevant *Annual Reports* of the Library.
[57] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1887*.
[58] See the *Annual Reports* of the Raffles Library and Museum for the years 1920 and 1939.

(*a*) The appointment of a qualified librarian in 1920 was somewhat of a landmark in the history of the Raffles Library, which had hitherto been managed by library clerks under the general supervision of the Director. It was partly a concession on the part of the Government to the frequent complaints of the Directors that the burden of looking after both library and museum was too heavy for one man to carry, and partly reflected the increasing interest of the Government in the field of education, hitherto the province of Christian missions and local enterprise.

The first man to be appointed librarian of the Raffles Library was Mr. J. Johnston, a Scottish librarian, who assumed office in May 1920 and held this post until 1935.[59]

To some extent Mr. Johnston's period of service was a disappointment. He made some improvements by introducing a card catalogue to supplement the out-dated printed catalogues of the library, and re-arranged the books in the library into more logical groupings. In the main, however, the reforms which he instituted were neither imaginative nor revolutionary. He did not introduce any additional services for readers, nor did he attempt to make the library wield a more effective and dynamic role in the community. He largely continued his predecessors' policy of giving priority to the needs of the subscribers of the library rather than to the needs of the community as a whole, and continued stocking the library with light, recreational reading material.

Mr. Johnston cannot be entirely blamed for this policy. After all, he was a prisoner of both his environment and his times. The concept of a dynamic public library service actively reaching out to the community was still to be widely accepted. Furthermore, the Raffles Library had long since deviated from the original idea of its founders as a public reference as well as lending library, and had degenerated into a mere commercial lending library.

Moreover, even if Mr. Johnston's improvements were not revolutionary, they were at least improvements on the past. Before 1920, the only way in which a reader could get some idea of the contents of the library was through its printed catalogues, which, however, were seldom up to date. These were occasionally supplemented by lists of the latest additions to the library. When Mr. Johnston assumed office, he immediately proceeded to compile an author and title catalogue on cards of all the fiction works in the library. This was completed in 1922.[60] In 1923, he began a card catalogue of all non-fiction works added to the library from 1920 onwards. This was an author, subject and title catalogue in one alphabetical sequence.[61] The old practice of issuing printed catalogues for sale to subscribers appears to have been continued despite the existence of the card catalogues. These were kept up to date by quarterly bulletins of the library's latest additions.

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[59] Information about Mr. Johnston's period of office obtained from the *Annual Reports* of the library for the period 1920–35.

[60] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1922.*

[61] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1923.*

Mr. Johnston originally intended to reclassify the library by the Dewey Decimal Classification,[62] but for some undisclosed reason, he never carried out his plan. Nevertheless, he managed to make some improvements to the then existing arrangements of the library. He arranged all the fiction works in one alphabetical sequence by the names of authors, while classifying non-fiction works under more logical groupings. In addition, he kept apart those works dealing with Malaya and the surrounding islands as a special Malaysia collection. From this small beginning, the collection has grown into one of the best in Southeast Asia.

The reforms which Mr. Johnston instituted were not only in the cataloguing and classification of the library. He also introduced a new charging method in 1922. Hitherto loans had been recorded in a ledger, but this system was scrapped in favour of a charging system involving the use of two book cards, each bearing the name of the author, title, book and shelf number.[63]

Mr. Johnston also endeavoured to overhaul the book stock by discarding "a mass of worthless fiction," rebinding rare and precious works, and introducing a more systematic book selection policy.[64] And finally, Mr. Johnston was responsible for the opening of the junior library, but more of that later. Mr. Johnston's period of administration cannot be described as a total failure; and even if it was a failure, it was certainly an impressive one.

(*b*) Perhaps, the most striking development of the period 1920–39, from the point of view of the Raffles Library and of the history of librarianship in Malaya and Singapore, was the establishment of the junior library.

One of the first steps taken by Mr. Johnston was to urge the formation of the junior library as an integral part of the Raffles Library. In 1921, he pointed out that there were more than 10,500 pupils in English schools (i.e. schools where the medium of instruction was English), and noted that outside the school curricula there were no organized reading facilities for the Singapore children.[65] He concluded:

> Educationists have been among the first to commend the work of libraries among the younger generation and such work is widely recognised as a necessary corollary to the education given by schools. Although there are reasons why a junior library in Singapore cannot hope to emulate the multifarious activities of such libraries in Britain there are many evidences on the other hand which show that a Singapore junior library would prove a beneficient and much needed counter attraction to less uplifting amusements.[66]

Although Mr. Johnston had made his recommendation for a junior library in 1920, lack of funds prevented the realization of his plan until 1923, when a part of the library's revenue was set aside to establish the junior library.

The junior library, which was officially opened on 21st July, 1923, by the

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[62] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1920.*
[63] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1922.*
[64] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1920.*
[65] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1921.*
[66] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1922.*

Governor of the Straits Settlements, was housed in one of the large ground floor rooms adjoining the Reading Room of the main library, and provided with bookcases, tables, and chairs of special design. The initial collection of books, which numbered 1,000 volumes, was "representative of the literature provided for children and young people in Britain."[67] It was classified as follows: Fiction for Boys; Fiction for Girls; General Non-Fiction; Books for Boy Scouts; Books for Girl Guides; Books for Reference. A card catalogue of subjects and authors was also prepared.[68]

The library was not made as much use of as had been anticipated. It had an initial membership of 365[69] and reached its peak in 1929 with a total of 1,486 junior subscribers.[70] After that date the number of junior subscribers began to fall off so that by 1939, there were only 707 junior subscribers.[71] This decline could be partly attributed to the effects of the depression years. But there were other more important reasons not only for the decline in the number of subscribers, but also for the small number that made use of the library in any one year.

The main reason was that a subscription was charged, and very few of the local students could afford this. Another arose from the fact that the junior library catered only for the English-educated, since all the books were in English. But in Singapore, the majority of school children were educated in private Chinese schools. Still there was a large number of students in English schools who constituted potential library users. But these were not attracted to the library; firstly, because the habit of reading outside their studies had not been cultivated in the majority of students who came from schools where no libraries existed; secondly, because the type of books supplied was more suitable for the European child than for the Asian child; and thirdly, because no help was provided in the choice of reading matter or use of the catalogue for the child who stepped into the library for the first time, and the library remained for most school children a bewildering and forbidding place, where the slightest noise brought forth a sharp rebuke from a frosty-faced lady.

(*c*) Another important development during the period 1920 to 1939 was the increasing use of the library by non-Europeans. In 1921, there were hardly any Asian members of the library; in 1931, there were 350 out of a total of 1,336 subscribers.[72] This increase was largely due to the influx of students from the Raffles College, established in 1929 to provide training for secondary school teachers and recruits to the Straits Settlements Civil Service. As will be shown in a later chapter, the College never possessed a proper library, and consequently, the students had to rely on the only public library that Singapore possessed. Raffles College students were given special concessions, and were permitted to borrow two non-fiction works at a time (instead of the usual one) for the price of a third class subscription.[73]

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[67] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1923.*
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1929.*
[71] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1939.*
[72] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1931.*

The number of non-European members would presumably have been higher if the library had been stocked with books in languages other than English, for at this period most of the Chinese, who constituted the greater part of the population of Singapore, were only literate in Chinese. But it was the general policy of the time to ignore the Chinese-educated section of the community, and to concentrate only on the welfare of the English-educated section, with unfortunate political repercussions in the post-war period. From the point of view of the library, this has led to the unfortunate tendency to regard it as a "European" library even to-day, although large numbers of books in Chinese, Malay and Tamil are provided.

(*d*) A fourth important development of the period was the creation of the archives department in 1938. The first Archivist was Mr. Tan Soo Chye, a Raffles College graduate, whose duties were "to trace, record and preserve historical and colonial records and to perform research and routine work of an allied nature."[74] At this date, the archives collection of the library consisted mainly of printed material forwarded to the library in the past by the Straits Settlements Government—official gazettes, blue books, government reports and other official documents, as well as copies of early newspapers. Mr. Tan first put into order this great mass of unsorted material which had hitherto lain neglected and unused in the stores, and began to prepare an index to this material.[75]

In 1939, the Government transferred to the archives from the Colonial Secretariat, Singapore, "all records relating to the Straits Settlements for the period 1800 to 1867, nine groups of records, totalling 170 large bound volumes dealing with the early administration of the Penang Government up to 1830."[76]

The decision of the Government to establish an archives division was a very wise step, for this has led to the preservation of several important historical records which might otherwise have been lost during the Japanese invasion and occupation.

1939–45: The Second World War. Very little is known about the history of the library during this period for no *Annual Reports* were published.

The island of Singapore succumbed to the Japanese in February, 1942. During the Japanese occupation, many books and manuscripts belonging to the library vanished. The greatest loss suffered by the library was the disappearance of 400 volumes of manuscripts relating to the administration of the Straits Settlements for the period 1800 to 1867.[77] It is said that the library owed its survival during the war years to the efforts of one Tanakadate, a Japanese professor, who used his authority to preserve the library from the depredations of his colleagues.[78]

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[73] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1929.*

[74] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1938.*

[75] Tan Soo Chye, "Straits Settlements Records (a Classified List of the Catalogued Records, 1806–1867, in the Raffles Museum and Library)," *JMBRAS*, 22:187–88, March 1949.

[76] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1939.*

[77] L. Aroozoo, *et al.*, "Raffles National Library Feature," *Singapore Free Press*, November 12, 1960, p. 9.

1945–57: Towards a National Library Service. At the end of the war, Singapore, like Malaya, was not immune to the political and social winds of change which swept across all Asia. The cry was for a greater degree of political self-government, for more schools, more institutions of higher learning, and for more and better libraries. In the library field, Singapore was more fortunate than Malaya, because she had in the Raffles Library, the seeds of a national library system.

Until 1953, the library continued to exist in the way it had done in the past, without direction or aim, with a relatively small membership,[79] and trying its best to reconcile its conflicting roles as a national reference collection and a subscription library. During the period 1945–53, it was plagued by constant changes in the administration,[80] and was thus unable to give very effective service.

Some reconstruction and reorganization were carried out immediately after the war. The British Council proved to be of great help by providing funds in 1947 and 1948 totalling £4,000 sterling, of which £3,000 were used for the purchase of reference books, and £1,000 for much needed library equipment, such as a new set of furniture for the children's library, a microfilm reader, and relevant cataloguing and filing apparatus.[81]

Perhaps the most striking reforms carried out in the period 1945–53 were those effected by Miss L.E. Bridges, who was librarian from 1950 to August, 1951. She it was who introduced the Dewey Decimal system to the library, and modernized the circulation, overdue and reservation routines. During Miss Bridges' administration too, the first branch library with about 2,000

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[78] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[79] The membership figures for the period 1948–53 were as follows:

	Adult	*Junior*
1948	3,075	1,136
1949	3,310	2,731
1950	3,491	2,852
1951	4,000	4,118
1952	5,203	3,413
1953	5,842	4,390

— Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Reports, 1948–53.*

[80] The following were librarians during the period 1946–53:

1946–47	Colonel (now Dr.) G. Achey.
1948	Mrs. H. Witte.
1949	Mrs. M. Shelly.
1950	Mrs. W. Hatcher.
1951–1952 (Aug.)	Miss L.E. Bridges.
1952 (Sept.–Dec.)	Mrs. J. Green.
1953 (Feb.–1954 Aug.)	Mrs. G.F.W. Hudson.

——Khoo Joo Chuan, Acting Director, National Library, *Personal Communication*, 2nd May, 1962.

[81] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1948.*

books was established in the Social Welfare Community Centre in the Serangoon district.[82]

The library's growth in the post-war years was far more rapid than in the past. That the library was becoming more popular was evident from the growing Asian membership which for the first time began to outstrip the number of European members.[83] By 1953, the library had 5,842 adult and 4,390 junior members, and a stock of about 80,000 volumes. Book issues for 1953 were 115,717 volumes of fiction and 31,949 of non-fiction in the main library, and 57,176 volumes of fiction and 9,349 of non-fiction in the junior library.[84] With the library's expansion came a move to replace its former building.

In 1953, Mr. Lee Kong Chian, a Singapore millionaire philanthropist, offered the Government through his Lee Foundation a sum of $375,000 for the building of a new library on condition that the services of the library should be free, and that books in Malay, Chinese and Tamil should be provided as well as books in the English and other European languages.[85] The Government accepted Mr. Lee's offer, and in turn decided to contribute whatever additional sum of money was required to complete the new building.

In order to carry out its decision to establish a free public library, the Government in 1954, appointed Mr. L.M. Harrod, F.L.A., former Chief Librarian and Curator of the Islington Public Libraries, as librarian of Raffles Library with the particular task of advising on the construction of the new library and on the organization of a system of libraries for the island as a whole.[86]

On the basis of Mr. Harrod's recommendations, an Ordinance was passed in September, 1957 "to repeal the provisions of the Raffles Societies Ordinance (*Chapter 312 of the Revised Edition*) which related to the Raffles Library; to constitute a Raffles National Library, to provide for the management and control of the Raffles National Library and for purposes connected therewith."[87] The Ordinance embodied all the provisions for a library recommended by the 1955 UNESCO Seminar on Public Libraries for Asia.

It provided that the Raffles National Library "shall be the only authority in the Colony providing a library service for the general public from funds provided in whole or in part by the Legislative Assembly and any library

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[82] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Reports*, 1951–52.

[83] Comparative figures for Asian and European membership during the period 1948–50 were as follows:

	European	*Asian*
1948 ..	1,253	1,822
1949 ..	1,189	1,898
1950 ..	1,029	2,462

——Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Reports, 1948–50.*

[84] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1953.*

[85] National Library, Singapore, "Press Statement Issued at Press Conference, on Wednesday 9th November, 1960." (Mimeographed).

[86] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1954.*

[87] Singapore, Legislative Assembly, Laws, Statutes, etc. *Raffles National Library Ordinance, 1957 (No. 31 of 1957).*

which is operated from funds provided in whole or in part by the Legislative Assembly shall operate as a library under the Raffles National Library and be under the management and control of the Director."[88]

It laid down the functions of the National Library as follows:[89]

(*a*) to promote and encourage the use of literary material and information therefrom by the establishment of lending and reference libraries and mobile library services;
(*b*) to acquire literary material generally;
(*c*) to collect and receive all books required to be deposited in a public library under the provisions of the Printers and Publishers Ordinance and to preserve such books;
(*d*) to receive, preserve and administer the official archives of the Colony and to arrange for the micro-filming of such archives;
(*e*) to make the literary material and micro-film and other copies in its possession available for reference and for loan subject to proper safeguards against loss or damage;
(*f*) to provide bibliographical services to Government departments and the Legislative Assembly;
(*g*) to compile a current national bibliography and historical national bibliographies;
(*h*) to compile and maintain a union catalogue of libraries of all kinds;
(*i*) to act as the organizing agency for the national and international lending of literary material;
(*j*) to act as the organizing centre for the national and international exchange of literary materials; and
(*k*) to initiate and promote co-operation between the Raffles National Library and other libraries in the discharge of the above functions.

A most important provision of the Ordinance was that no charge should be made for the use of any literary material of the National Library,[90] literary material being defined as "any form of written or graphic record, including manuscripts, typescripts, books, newspapers, periodicals, music, photographs, maps, prints, drawing and other graphic art forms, films, film strips, gramophone records, tape recording and other recordings on paper, film or other material and reproductions thereof."[91]

The Ordinance also constituted a National Library Board to advise the Minister on the operation of the Library, and to consider and make recommendations on all matters relating to: (*a*) the provision, regulation, extension and use of static and mobile library services to the public and to Government departments; (*b*) the provision and operation of schemes for the exchange and lending of literary material between libraries; (*c*) the compilation of bibliographical information; (*d*) the financing of library services and activities; and (*e*) the training of librarians and library assistants.[92]

It can be seen that the functions of the National Library are quite unique. It performs several functions not usually associated with a national library, for, as well as being a national library, it is a bibliographical and book exchange centre, and a free public library. This feature is in keeping with the recommendation of the 1955 UNESCO Seminar that "in some countries, particularly smaller countries, the functions of the national library and the central library board should be integrated for better and more economical development."[93]

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[88] *Ibid.*, sec. 3.
[89] *Ibid.*, sec. 5.
[90] *Ibid.*, sec. 7.
[91] *Ibid.*, sec. 2.
[92] *Ibid.*, sec. 9.

It may perhaps be felt that it is undesirable to combine a national library with a public library, since the lending functions of a public library run counter to the preservation and reference functions of a national library. But it would probably be uneconomical to establish two institutions to provide the separate functions, particularly in an island the size of Singapore. Besides, the small resources of the island state will not permit it at the present time.

The Raffles National Library Ordinance became operative on April 1st, 1958. From that date the Raffles Library became a National Library. It also ceased to charge subscriptions and became a truly public library. In 1960, the Raffles National Library was renamed the National Library, Singapore.[94]

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, 1958–1962

In this section we can only provide a fairly general outline of the various aspects of the national library service. To go into details would require a book.

The Building. The new National Library building was officially opened by H.E. the Yang di-Pertuan Negara (Head of State) on 12th November, 1960. Designed by Government architects in consultation with the former Director, Mr. L.M. Harrod, the library took three-and-a-half years to build and cost $2,154,000. Described by its architects as "neither aggressively contemporary not imposingly classical in detail," the building has been strongly criticized for its architectural design and for its severe red-brick exterior.[95]

Among other things, the building provides accommodation for a large Adult Lending Library, a Reference Library, an Exhibition Hall, a Lecture Hall, a Braille Library, study carrels for research workers and students, a microfilm room, a Conference Room, a Children's Library, loading bays for mobile libraries, and a five-storeyed stack for the State archives. The total floor area of the new building is 101,500 square feet. It was originally intended to air-condition the whole building, but this plan was given up as being too expensive, and at present, only certain sections of the library are air-conditioned.[96]

Stock. The total library stock was reported to be over 180,000 volumes in 1961, of which 3,600 were in Malay and Indonesian, over 17,000 in Chinese and 3,000 in Tamil. The library only began to acquire books in the vernacular languages from 1954 onwards. There were over 40,000 books in the Children's

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[93] Unesco, *Public Libraries for Asia; the Delhi Seminar* ("Public Library Manuals, no. 7"; Paris: Unesco, 1956), p. 28.

[94] Singapore, Legislative Assembly, Laws, Statutes, etc. *Raffles National Library* (*Change of Name*) *Ordinance, 1960* (*No. 66 of 1960*).

[95] H. Anuar, "New Singapore National Library Building," *MLJ*, 1(2):17, January 1961.

[96] *Ibid.*

Library and over 10,000 in the Reference Library. In addition, the library subscribed to 400 current periodicals and 500 annuals, and had over 4,000 pieces of sheet music and scores, and 177 Braille books.[97]

The greater part of the library's stock was acquired after 1954 when the decision was taken to establish a free library service for Singapore residents. Average expenditure on the library exclusive of staff salaries from 1958 to 1961 was in the region of $50,000 per annum.[98]

The collection was not very strong in the scientific field. It was estimated that only about 10,000 volumes in the library were scientific.[99] However, the library was very strong in history and topography, and had a valuable Malaysia collection, started in 1924 by Mr. Johnston, its first professional librarian.[100]

The library houses the State's archives and is the depository library for all Singapore publications. Until 1960, publications were deposited in the library under the Printers and Publishers Ordinance of 1952,[101] which was a direct descendent of the Book Registration Ordinance of 1886, by which Straits Settlements publications had been deposited in the Raffles Library. The Printers and Publishers Ordinance of 1952 was little more than an amended version of the Book Registration Ordinance and did not differ very much in its essentials from the earlier ordinance.

Thus the Printers and Publishers Ordinance provided for three copies of every book printed in Singapore (instead of the Straits Settlements) to be delivered to the Government,[102] for one of these copies to be transmitted to the Trustees of the British Museum and another to such public library in Singapore as the Governor directed.[103]

Like the earlier Book Registration Ordinance, it excluded Government publications from its provisions,[104] although in practice Government publications were frequently deposited in the Raffles Library; did not specifically state that one copy of every publication should be deposited in the Raffles Library although in practice this was always done; and placed the onus of delivering the publications on the printer rather than the publisher.[105]

When the National Library was established, it became necessary to revise some of the obsolete sections of the Ordinance. Consequently, in December 1960, the Ordinance was amended.[106] The Amended Ordinance provides for the administration of the Printers and Publishers Ordinance by the Director of the National Library, and for six copies, instead of three as hitherto, of every publication (including Government publications) to be delivered to the Director of the National Library, who has the power to dispose of the copies as he thinks fit; and places the onus of observing the provisions of the Ordinance on the publisher rather than the printer.

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[97] Khoo, *Personal Communication.*

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] H. Anuar, "Scientific Information Facilities in Singapore," *MLJ,* 1(2):46, October 1961.

[100] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1924.*

[101] Singapore, Legislative Assembly, Laws, Statutes, etc. *Printers and Publishers Ordinance* (cap. 196 of *The Laws of the Colony of Singapore,* Rev. ed. Singapore, 1955).

[102] *Ibid.,* sec. 4(1).

[103] *Ibid.,* sec. 5.

[104] *Ibid.,* sec. 11.

[105] *Ibid.,* sec. 4(1).

[106] Singapore, Legislative Assembly, Laws, Statutes, etc. *Printers and Publishers (Amendment) Ordinance, 1960 (No. 70 of 1960).*

The National Library is not only the depository library for all Singapore publications, but is also a depository for all the publications of the United Nations, ECAFE, and I.L.O. In addition it receives all the publications of the British Standards Institution.[107]

Use Made of the Library. Thus far the demands on the National Library's services as a public library have exceeded those made on it as a national library. Nevertheless, it has begun to carry out the functions of a national bibliographical centre, and recently began to compile a union list of scientific and technical serials in Government Department libraries. As the depository library for all Singapore's publications, it will be responsible for a national bibliography in the future.

In its role as public library, the National Library not only operates a service in the heart of the city, but also branches and mobile services for people living in rural areas.

The demands made on the public library services are very great. Since the library began providing a free service in 1958, its membership has been climbing at a spectacular rate. In 1956 and 1957, the library had a total membership of 7,356[108] and 8,628,[109] respectively. By the end of 1958, when the library ceased to charge a subscription, its membership had more than doubled to 19,965.[110] This leaped to 55,998 in 1961.[111] Much of the phenomenal increase has been in the children's membership from 3,649 in 1956 and 4,442 in 1957 to 12,557 in 1958, and more than 25,000 in 1960.[112]

Book issues have also increased at a corresponding rate—from 338,978 volumes in 1957[113] to 711,540 in 1961.[114]

The figures given above demonstrate beyond doubt the existence and extent of books and library demand in Singapore.

In 1961 it was reported that the library was grossly understaffed. It had only 3 professionally qualified librarians and 17 library assistants on its staff. The Government had sent a few library assistants overseas for training, but the demand for trained librarians far exceeded the supply.[115] By 1965, however, the situation had improved considerably. At that time the National Library had 41 professional posts.

Conclusion. The Singapore National Library, Asia's youngest national library, is a shining example of what can be accomplished with limited resources. The services provided by the library are already quite impressive. It endeavours to serve the diverse needs of its cosmopolitan population by providing books in all four main languages spoken in the country—Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil; while its branches and mobile libraries bring its services to those living in outlying rural areas. Its archives contain important source materials of the history of Singapore, Malaya and the surrounding territories.

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[107] Anuar, *MLJ*, 1(2):46, October 1961.

[108] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1956.*

[109] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1957.*

[110] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959*, p. 204.

[111] Khoo, *Personal Communication.*

[112] J. Manson, "Singapore's National Library," *Pelita*, 1(7):22, 1961.

[113] Raffles Library and Museum, *Annual Report, 1957.*

[114] Khoo, *Personal Communication.*

[115] *Ibid.*

The establishment of a national library service is of particular importance in a young and developing country such as Singapore, where education is regarded as the key to economic progress, and where shaky democratic institutions may founder on the rocks of ignorance.

C. *The USIS Library, Singapore*

With the National Library providing such a good public library service there is no need to dwell at length on the public library run by USIS, Singapore.

Established in 1950, the USIS Library, Singapore, has changed its home twice and is now housed in a wing of the new American Embassy building in Hill Street, less than a mile from the National Library.

In 1961, the library had a stock of 12,000 books in English, 3,000 in Chinese and 300 in Malay and Indonesian. It subscribed to 200 periodicals. The library was fairly well patronized, its registered membership being 14,700. Book circulation in 1960 comprised 57,800 volumes in English, 12,450 in Chinese, and 1,580 in Malay and Indonesian. The library has a collection of gramophone records, tape recordings and lantern slides, which are only available for loan to organizations and institutions.[116]

D. *The Library Association of Singapore*

It would not be inappropriate to include a brief description of the Library Association of Singapore in this chapter, because the Association is most active in the public library field.

The Singapore Library Association, like the P.P.P.T.M., had its origin in the Malayan Library Group, which, as shown in Chapter II, was founded by Singapore librarians. As a result, the constitutions of both library associations are almost identical.

The Singapore Library Association was inaugurated in 1960, at about the same time as the P.P.P.T.M. At the time of inauguration it had 56 Singapore members, 41 Malayan members, and 10 overseas members. In March 1961, it had 70 individual and 9 institutional members. The Association is more fortunate than the P.P.P.T.M. in that it has a larger proportion of qualified librarians among its membership.[117]

The Association has been very active in promoting library development and librarianship in Singapore. In 1960 and 1961, it conducted classes in librarianship, began a survey of secondary school libraries, started a union catalogue of books on librarianship, presented a report on salaries of librarians in government service to the Government, and held several general meetings of members.[118] It began publishing a semi-annual journal in April 1961, and participated in the "International Conference on Cataloguing Principles," held in Paris in October, 1961.[119]

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[116] Chuan Whye Hong, "The USIS Library in Singapore," *SLJ*, 1(2):76–78, October, 1961.

[117] H. Anuar, "Malayan Library Group to the Library Association of Singapore; the First Six Years," *SLJ*, 1(1):3–4, April 1961.

The Association has a high standing with the Government and is represented on the National Library Board. It is composed of forward-looking and enthusiastic librarians who are fully aware of their important role in the new Singapore of the future.

E. *Conclusion*

Possessing a well-organized public library system and a strong professional association, Singapore is far more fortunate than Malaya where library development is still unco-ordinated and haphazard. What is more important is the fact that it has an enlightened Government which recognizes that the best-laid development schemes would come to naught if the people were not educated, and that education and libraries go hand in hand.

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[118] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[119] Library Association of Singapore, *Annual Report for the year ended 31st March, 1962.* Chap. V

CHAPTER V

SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN MALAYA AND SINGAPORE

A. *Definition*

A special library has been defined as "a library which is concerned almost exclusively with the literature of a particular subject or group of subjects."[1] In this definition would be included the libraries of learned and professional societies, of government departments, of research institutions, and of industrial and commercial organizations. It is usual to exclude from this definition the libraries of teaching institutions, such as technical colleges and universities, and the special or departmental collections of general reference libraries, although technically speaking these are also special libraries.

B. *Malaya*

Most of Malaya's special libraries are those attached to old research institutes and government departments, and are financed wholly or partially from Federal funds. Most of the research institutes were organized primarily to assist the economy of the country. And as Malaya's economy was and is based on her primary industries—principally rubber and tin—research in the past has been directed towards the agricultural and mining sectors of the economy. Consequently, the largest special libraries are those attached to the Rubber Research Institute, the Forest Research Institute, the Department of Agriculture, and the Geological Survey Department.

This situation is likely to change in the next decade or two. For the Federation Government has committed itself to a programme of industrial expansion as the concomitant of economic progress. Malaya had very few secondary industries before World War II. Such industries as existed were mainly associated with primary production; for instance, the processing of rubber latex, tin and foodstuffs. Since the war, and particularly since her achievement of independence, an increasingly wide range of secondary industries have been established, notably in the manufacture of paints and varnishes, rubber and leather footwear, cigarettes, beverages, and chemicals and chemical products. But very little industrial research is being carried out locally by either the Government or private industrial concerns. The majority of industrial and commercial firms are subsidiaries of overseas firms and rely on their parent organizations to supply them with information regarding the latest technical developments. Local firms in the main do not have the necessary funds to conduct any intensive research. For this reason none of the commercial and industrial companies possess reference collections of any importance, although quite a number subscribe to journals which are of interest to them and maintain stocks of their house journals.

The Government has promised to develop research facilities in Malaya to provide the various industries in Malaya with the technical "know how" which has hitherto been sought from outside the country. In 1961, it was stated that the Government would soon establish a National Chemical Laboratory (probably based on the present Department of Chemistry) an institute of Industrial Technology, a Malayan Standards Institution, and a National Testing Establishment.[2] But thus far only the Standards Institution has been set up.

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[1] J.E. Wright, "The Special Library and Information Service," *Handbook of Special Librarianship and Information*, ed. W. Ashworth (London: Aslib, 1955), p. 1.

What about the libraries of learned societies and professional institutions? Malaya is not lacking in learned and professional societies and associations, as the following list of the more important ones shows:

The Malayan Historical Society
The Malayan Scientific Association
The Malayan Nature Society
The Institution of Engineers
The Malayan Medical Association
The Malayan Economic Society
The Malayan Mathematical Society
The Science Society of Malaya
The Institute of Physics (Malayan Branch)
The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (Malayan Branch)
The Royal Institute of Chemistry (Malayan Branch)
The Institute of Biology.

But none of them possess any libraries, although they may keep stocks of their own publications. This is largely because most of them are based upon the University of Malaya, and so can fall back on the library resources of the University.

Consequently, it is largely true to say that the important special libraries in Malaya are those attached to Federal Government bodies or to Federal Government Departments. Malaya's special libraries fall into two main groups: (i) scientific; and (ii) non-scientific.

(i) Scientific Libraries

There are about a dozen special libraries which belong to the category of scientific libraries. They may be arranged in order of importance as follows:

(*a*) The Library of the Department of Agriculture (43,000 vols.)
(*b*) The Library of the Rubber Research Institute (21,000 vols.)
(*c*) The Library of the Institute for Medical Research (9,765 vols.)
(*d*) The Library of the Geological Survey Department (15,000 vols.)
(*e*) The Libraries of the Forest Department, comprising the Library of the Forest Research Institute (8,500 vols.), and the Library at the Forest Department Headquarters (4,000 vols.)

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[2] Federation of Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961* (Kuala Lumpur: Govt. Press, 1961), p. 286.

(*f*) The Library of the Drainage and Irrigation Department (4,460 vols.)

(*g*) The Libraries of the Museums Department, comprising the Library of the National Museum (1,478 vols.), and the Library of the Perak Museum (2,500 vols.)

(*h*) The Library of the Department of Chemistry (1,500 vols.)

(*i*) The Library of the Department of Public Works (1,172 vols.)

(*j*) The Library of the Department of Town and Country Planning (1,000 vols.)

(*k*) The Library of the Veterinary Research Institute (859 vols.)

(*l*) The Library of the Department of Mines (Research Division) (367 vols.).

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The Department (now Ministry) of Agriculture, Federation of Malaya, had its origin in the earlier Department of Agriculture, Federated Malay States, established in 1905. This Department was expanded in scope to include the Straits Settlements in 1919, and with the inauguration of the Federation of Malaya in 1948, it was reconstituted as the Department of Agriculture, Federation of Malaya.

The present Department comprises one Federal Department and eleven State Departments. The Federal Department is responsible for agricultural research and investigational work, and includes a Research Branch with specialized divisions of Soils, Botany, Chemistry, Plant Pathology and Entomology; an Agronomy Branch, which carries out field experimentation at experiment stations established throughout the country; an Education Branch, which until 1962 maintained the College of Agriculture at Serdang, near Kuala Lumpur, and three agricultural schools; and a Publications Branch, which, in addition to publishing all departmental reports, technical journals and bulletins, maintains a very comprehensive agricultural library for the use of the research staff of the Department and the public.

The Library of the Publications Branch comprises a Main Library, located at the headquarters of the Federal Department in Kuala Lumpur; ten divisional libraries situated in the offices and laboratories of the Research Branch; and branch libraries in the eleven States of the Federation, and three Federal Experiment Stations. The College of Agriculture and the agricultural schools also possess libraries, which until recently were under the general supervision of the Librarian of the Department of Agriculture, but provided their own funds for the purchase of new books and periodicals.

In addition to the Federal Department's library, with its branches and divisions, the various State Agricultural Departments also maintain small collections. A union catalogue of the holdings of all branch and divisional libraries of the Federal Department, and of the State Department libraries, is kept at the Federal Headquarters. The Librarian of the Department of Agriculture advises all these centres on matters connected with library administration and pays them occasional visits. In this section, only a description of the Library of the Federal Department of Agriculture will be provided, since the State Department collections are small and unimportant.

Brief History. According to Mr. P.J. Verghese, the former librarian, the Department of Agriculture had a small collection of books as early as 1905, which were brought to Malaya by its first Director.[3] But it was not until 1907 that a suitable place was provided for the small library. In the early years, the library was the responsibility of the Government Mycologist. But in 1925, the growth of the library caused by the expansion of the Department's activities led to the creation of the post of librarian.[4] The first librarian held office until his retirement in 1932, and was assisted in his work by two clerks.

Between 1932 and 1939, the Department suffered from lack of funds, and was forced to undertake several economy measures as a result of which the vacant post of librarian was not filled, and subscriptions to several periodicals were discontinued. In 1939, a lady doctor, a refugee, was appointed to the post of librarian on a far lower scale than her predecessor. On her resignation in 1941, Mr. Verghese assumed office, having been transferred from his post as librarian of the King Edward VII College of Medicine, Singapore.[5]

The library suffered some losses during the Japanese occupation. A considerable number of publications transferred to the College of Agriculture when it was founded in 1931 and practically everything in the experimental stations and divisions of the Department were lost during this period.[6] The library was rehabilitated after the war, and has grown both in the size of its collection and scope of its activities. It was managed in 1961 by a staff of five: the librarian, two clerks, and two attendants.[7]

The Collection. The library's collection totals about 43,000 volumes.[8] It has some 1,340 sets of periodicals,[9] but, of these, only 530 are current.[10] In addition, it possesses about forty volumes of out-of-print periodicals on microfilm.[11]

The library has complete sets of all the publications of the Department of Agriculture, which are by no means meagre,[12] as well as those of other local institutions, such as the Rubber Research Institute, the Forest Research Institute, the Fisheries Department, and the Veterinary Department. It also keeps the publications of foreign institutions, such as the Bureau of Agriculture (London), the (British) Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Agriculture Organization and its forerunner, the International Institute of Agriculture. A considerable number of agricultural publications from other British Commonwealth and foreign agricultural institutions are also received.[13] Many of the publications are received in exchange for the Department of Agriculture's publications.

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[3] P.J. Verghese, "The Library of the Department of Agriculture, Federation of Malaya," *Q. Bull. IAALD*, 4:75, April 1959.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

[7] P.J. Verghese, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Verghese, *Q. Bull. IAALD*, 4:76, April 1959.

[10] Verghese, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*

[11] Verghese, *Q. Bull. IAALD*, 4:76, April 1959.

[12] The Department of Agriculture began publishing its own journal in August 1912. This was then known as the *Agricultural Bulletin of the Federated Malay States*. In 1922, it was renamed the *Malayan Agricultural Journal*, and since then has appeared uninterrupted except for a brief period during World War II. In addition to this journal, the Department between 1909 and 1929, issued a number of *Bulletins* dealing with various subjects connected with agriculture and related subjects pertaining to the country. These *Bulletins* were recast and issued in a *General* and *Scientific Series* in 1930. An *Economic Series* was

Classification and Cataloguing. The library is classified according to a system invented by Mr. Verghese and is a "combination of the system used by the Department of Agriculture, New South Wales, Australia, and the International Institute of Agriculture, Rome."[14] The catalogues to the resources of the library include: (1) an author catalogue of books and pamphlets in card form; (2) a subject catalogue of books and pamphlets in card form; (3) a classified subject catalogue of books and pamphlets in loose-leaf form; (4) a list of serials in loose-leaf form; and (5) a title catalogue of serials on visible indexes.[15]

Services. The library is available for use not only to departmental staff but also to the public. It is open without any formality to anyone for reference purposes, but loans of material to outsiders are generally only made through institutions, and then only if the material is not in demand by the departmental staff.[16]

The services provided by the library to departmental staff and sometimes to outsiders are quite comprehensive. These include the following:[17]

(1) The librarian scrutinizes all new issues of periodicals received and draws the attention of the departmental and research staff to items which are relevent to their work. Similarly, announcements of new publications appearing in the various publishers' catalogues and known to be of interest to a particular officer are brought to his notice, so that these new publications can be ordered if required.

(2) Reading lists and bibliographies are supplied on request.

(3) A translation service is provided. Translations into Malay and Chinese are done by Departmental translators; while translations of articles in foreign languages are occasionally commissioned to outsiders.

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added in 1932, and a *Mechanisation Series* in 1951. In 1956, it was decided to resume publishing the *Bulletins* in one series only. Consequently publication of the *Bulletins* in the various series was discontinued. The Department also issues a number of vernacular publications, journals and leaflets for the use of local farmers who are not conversant with the English language.—Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, Federation of Malaya. *Publications of the Division of Agriculture, March, 1961.*

[13] Verghese, *Q. Bull. IAALD*, 4:76, April 1959.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Verghese, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*

[17] Verghese, *Q. Bull. IAALD*, 4:77, April 1959.

(4) A library bulletin is issued giving information on current accessions, publications on order, and other matters of interest.

(5) A photocopying service is provided but only to departmental staff.

The library does not undertake any abstracting service, but this is of little moment since it subscribes to the major abstracting journals. It does not possess any microfilm readers, but officers of the Department have access to readers in other Government institutions.

THE LIBRARY OF THE RUBBER RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Introductory. Malaya is the world's largest single producer of rubber, which is the mainstay of the Federation's economy, and contributes about 60 % of the total value of the export earnings. It is thus no historical accident that she possesses the largest library in the world devoted to this single crop.

The Rubber Research Institute of Malaya (or R.R.I. for short) was founded in 1926 for the purpose of carrying out research in all aspects of rubber production.[18] The work of the Institute is financed by a voluntary cess on the exports of rubber from Malaya and contributions are also received from other rubber producing territories: Sarawak, Brunei and Sabah. The funds derived from this cess are administered by the Malayan Rubber Fund Board, and are also used to finance wholly or in part other research and development organizations both in Malaya and overseas, including the Natural Rubber Producers' Research Association, the Natural Rubber Development Board, and the Rubber Technical Developments Ltd.[19]

The chief executive of the R.R.I. is the Director. The Institute itself is divided into a number of divisions, for example, Soils, Botanical, Pathological, Chemical and Statistics. The first three divisions carry out research into "all aspects of cultivation of the tree and harvesting of the crop," while the Chemical division is engaged in investigations dealing with the conversion of the crop into marketable forms, and the Statistics division provides statistical advisory work and data-processing facilities for the research divisions.[20]

The library is intended to provide a service for all these divisions. Until recently, it formed a part of the Publications and Information Section, which itself is concerned with publishing the results of the work of the Institute, and providing an information service on the literature of the rubber-producing industry, chiefly through the medium of the library, and maintaining a liaison with organizations and research workers outside the Institute.[21]

The Library before 1958. The early history of the Library is buried in oblivion, and the lack of records prevents the tracing of its history in any detail. The library was probably founded at about the same time as the Institute, but like most of the special libraries established in the pre-war period, it was allowed to grow without much supervision.

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[18] L.A. Mills, *British Rule in Eastern Asia*... (London: Oxford U.P., 1942), p. 199.

[19] Malaya, *Official Year Book*, 1961, p. 231.

[20] *The Rubber Research Institute of Malaya;* a brochure describing the research and advisory work of the Institute with an introductory note on the early history of rubber research in Malaya (Kuala Lumpur: Rubber Research Institute, 1960), p. 3.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

In the early years, the library appears to have been managed by a library clerk under the general supervision of an officer in the Publication Section. After the war, a full-time librarian was appointed, and as the library grew, the staff was increased so that in 1957, it had a staff of four, including the librarian.[22] None of the staff was qualified, and, consequently, the library did not give many of the bibliographical and research services that one normally associates with a special library.

As late as 1957, Mrs. Tay reported that the library was little more than a storehouse for the books and periodicals. Lack of suitably trained staff prevented the library from giving good service.[23] Indeed, even the task of circulating the periodicals to the individual research officers was not the responsibility of the librarian. Each division compiled its own circulation lists and controlled the flow of periodicals to its own research staff. The result was that "the library staff knew only which division had a particular issue, but not which man" and it often took a considerable time to track down a number required urgently by other divisional staff.[24]

The library at this date already possessed a good collection of books and periodicals: about 15,000 bound volumes, and 270 current serials.[25] But it was inadequately housed, the accommodation consisting of a large rectangular room fifty feet by forty. The shelving was old-fashioned, being made of wood with non-adjustable shelves.[26]

The Modernisation of the Library. Clearly such a state of affairs could not be allowed to continue, particularly in the post-independent era. A major re-organization of the library was necessary if the work of the Institute was not to suffer; and in an age when Malaya was faced with the threat of synthetic rubber, the task was even more urgent. Thus late in 1958, the decision was taken to have the library accommodation and routines modernised. Mr. A.G. Parker, A.L.A., A.I.L., the librarian of the Natural Rubber Producers' Research Association in England, was seconded for a two year period (April 1959–March 1961) to the Institute to carry out these particular tasks.[27]

Mr. Parker's appointment marked the beginning of a new era for the library. The appointment of a qualified librarian for the first time in the library's history showed that the R.R.I. authorities had begun to appreciate the importance of the library to the work of the Institute, and the necessity to employ qualified staff to manage it, instead of clerical staff as hitherto. To ensure that, after Mr. Parker's departure at the end of his period of secondment, the library did not relapse into its old chaotic ways, the authorities appointed Mr. J.S. Soosai, a science graduate, as librarian-designate in July, 1959, and sent him on scholarship to the North Western Polytechnic School of Librarianship in England to obtain training as a librarian.

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[22] Ilse Tay, "Notes on Special and Research Libraries in Malaya," *MLGN*, 2(2):34, December 1957.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] A.G. Parker, "The Modernisation of the Library of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaya," *MLJ*, 1(1):15, October 1960.

[25] Tay, *MLGN*, 2(2):34, December 1957.

[26] Parker, *MLJ*, 1(1):12, October 1960.

[27] *Ibid.*

In the meanwhile, Mr. Parker set out to implement the decisions of the R.R.I. authorities to modernise the library. In order to improve the library's accommodation, he decided to renovate the large oblong room in which the library was housed by the addition of a mezzanine floor. This almost doubled existing floor and shelving space. He replaced the old-fashioned wooden shelving with new adjustable steel shelving; and acquired two additional rooms for the purpose of storage, and a photocopying and work room. The whole library was air-conditioned to provide protection for the valuable collection from the ravages of insects, damp and humidity.[28]

Mr. Parker found the service provided by the library to be poor because although "commendable progress" had been made in classifying the stock by U.D.C., the "catalogue was incomplete, not always consistent and sometimes rather unorthodox in its method of entry."[29] He also considered the loan recording and journal circulation routines "unsatisfactory."[30]

To improve the service and to bring it more into line with modern practice, Mr. Parker first began the work of reclassifying and recataloguing the whole of the post-1940 book stock, leaving the rest to be completed at some future date. He decided to retain the Universal Decimal Classification scheme mainly because detailed expansions were available for most of the topics dealt with by the library.[31] The compilation of a list of the journal holdings was also given top priority. The old system of circulating journals was scrapped in favour of a centralized system which permitted a greater degree of control by the library. The recording of periodical receipts, loans, circulation and holdings was improved by consolidating these records into one Roneodex visible index system.[32] Other important innovations included the introduction of a photocopying service, the purchase of a microfilm reader, and the stocking of the library with a small amount of material on microfilm.[33]

The Library in 1962. The reforms instituted by Mr. Parker have definitely been beneficial to the library. Its collection totals some 21,000 bound volumes covering such subjects as agriculture, biochemistry, botany, chemical technology, chemistry, microbiology, pesticides, physics, plant genetics, plant pathology, plant physiology, rubber cultivation, rubber statistics, rubber technology, and soil science.[34] The library of course stocks all the publications of the R.R.I. These include the *Journal of the Rubber Research Institute*, containing papers on its research work; the *Planters' Bulletin*, first published in 1939, and re-established as a new series in 1952; the *Annual Reports*, which summarize results for each year; and miscellaneous *Planting Manuals*, Information Cards on the processing of rubber, and booklets, which cover normal operations involved in the cultivation of rubber, and are issued in Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English.[35]

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[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 12–14.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] A.G. Parker, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

Expenditure on books in 1962 was $10,000, periodicals $15,000, and binding $2,000.[36] Under its present librarian, Mr. Soosai, the library has increased the scope of its service considerably. It carries out translation work for its research staff, particularly in French, German and Russian, and indexes information of interest. It possesses a comprehensive classified index prepared by cutting *Rubber Abstracts*, pasting these on cards, and filing them according to the Dawson classification. This index is in addition to the author, title and classified card catalogues, which readily make available the library's resources.[37]

The library has played an important part in the work of the Rubber Research Institute, which itself has made outstanding contributions to the science of rubber production, notably in the fields of "soil management, the selection of high-yielding material, planting systems, bud-grafting and tapping methods, disease control, and the improvement and standardisation of methods of processing rubber for export."[38]

THE LIBRARY OF THE INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Institute for Medical Research. The Institute for Medical Research (I.M.R.) was founded in Kuala Lumpur in 1900, largely through the initiative of Sir Frank Swettenham, then Resident General of the Federated Malay States.[39] It was then known as the "Pathological Institute" but its name was changed to the present one in the following year. Branches were soon established in Perak, Penang, Negri Sembilan and Kuantan.[40]

The primary purpose of the I.M.R. is the study of tropical diseases. Its several divisional laboratories conduct research into bacteriology, biochemistry, pathology, malariology, nutrition, virus diseases, and medical zoology. In addition to its pure research activities, the I.M.R. is responsible for the production of the various vaccines generally used in Malaya and South-East Asia.[41] The Institute also provides

> an advisory laboratory service; it trains laboratory staff for the Malayan Department of Medical Services and makes several hundred thousand routine bacteriological, pathological and biochemical tests every year for the medical services and private medical practitioners.[42]

The I.M.R. Library. The library was established at the same time as its parent organization, and originally occupied quarters in one of the rooms of the old buildings which now house the Division of Entomology, Malariology, Biochemistry and Nutrition. In 1928, it was moved to one of the large ground-floor rooms of a new building, and remained there until 1953, when it was shifted to its present accommodation in the third and newest building of the I.M.R.[43]

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[35] *Rubber Research Institute*..., p. 15.

[36] J.S. Soosai, *Personal Communication*, 2nd March, 1962.

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] *Rubber Research Institute*..., p. 2.

[39] Yap Chin Kwee, "Medical Research in Malaya," *Hemisphere*, 6(3):12, March 1962.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961*, p. 197.

[42] Yap, *Hemisphere*, 6(3):13, March 1962.

In the pre-war period, the library was under the charge of one or other of the senior officers of the Institute, who was responsible for the purchase of books and periodicals. The actual work of recording and circulating journals to officers of the Institute was done by a library clerk.[44] This tendency to treat the library as little more than a place of storage was quite prevalent in the pre-war period, and still prevails in many of Malaya's special libraries. The staff of the I.M.R. never asked for anything more than that a periodical or book should be made available to them when required. The idea of appointing a special librarian to engage in intensive literature searches, compile bibliographies, and answer queries, appear to have been alien to the authorities.

The library suffered heavy losses during the Japanese Occupation (1942–45). One of the first things the Japanese authorities did when they occupied Malaya was to move the entire contents of the I.M.R. Library to the King Edward VII College of Medicine in Singapore (now the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Singapore). The Japanese authorities apparently favoured the idea of carrying out medical research at one central point.[45]

The books and periodicals belonging to the I.M.R. were returned to the Institute after the war by the British authorities, but by that time large numbers of them had disappeared, so that the library never recovered its whole collection. The result is that to-day there are wide gaps in the serial collection of the library, and attempts to fill them through international exchange have not been wholly successful.[46]

For a few years after World War II, there was no change in the Institute's policy of treating the library merely as a convenient warehouse. Then in 1953, the decision was made to create the post of temporary librarian, a post which had hitherto been filled on and off by various senior officers in their spare time. This change was largely due to the efforts of Mrs. E.B. Merry who was put in charge of the library in 1950. After attending the First International Congress of Medical Librarians in London in 1953, as a representative of the Malayan Government, she prepared a short report, on the basis of which modifications were made in the management of the library.[47]

The decision to create the post of a full-time librarian was an important step forward, but the authorities concerned did not go far enough. They did not stipulate that the post should be held by a qualified librarian; furthermore, for salary purposes, the post was made and is graded on a clerical scale, thus making it impossible to recruit a qualified librarian. Indeed the fact that the post is a temporary one reflects the uncertainty of the authorities concerned regarding the value of a librarian even in such an important institution as the I.M.R. Never having been given a proper library service, the staff of the I.M.R. have never missed it, and in all likelihood will never miss it, as long as the library is under the charge of unqualified staff.

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[43] Ilse Tay, "The Library of the Institute for Medical Research, Kuala Lumpur," *MLJ*, 1(2):14, January 1961.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Ibid.*

A former librarian, Mrs. Ilse Tay, who assumed office in March 1953, was the first to begin modernizing the routines in the library. She was assisted by only one library clerk, who was appointed in 1949. In 1962, she complained that the amount of routine work in which she was involved made it impossible for her to give more than minimal service to the library's clientele, then comprising twenty-seven I.M.R. staff and fifty medical officers.[48]

Apart from having to catalogue and classify new books and serials; occasionally compile bibliographies and make translations; and answer information queries ranging from "have we any information in Sheehan's Syndrome?" to "What is the incidence of hook-worm infestation in Malaya?"; she had to help the library clerk to (*a*) circulate the journals; (*b*) record loans of books; (*c*) prepare volumes for binding; (*d*) write reminders for overdue books and periodicals; (*e*) trace numbers of periodicals lost during circulation; and (*f*) despatch the numerous reprints of articles published by officers of the I.M.R., and the *Annual Reports*, *Bulletins* and *Studies* of the I.M.R., to 685 institutions and individuals throughout Malaya and the world.[49] What makes one marvel is that she could still say, in a masterpiece of understatement, "full and efficient service is impossible under the present staff arrangements."[50]

The library now has about 9,765 bound volumes of which 3,305 volumes are books and 6,460 are periodicals. It received 222 current serials. This number excludes the annual reports of ninety-one overseas institutions and sixty-one local institutions and government departments. The subjects covered by the library are principally medicine, public health, entomology and parasitology.[51]

The books are classified by C.C. Barnard's Classification for Medical and Veterinary Libraries, while the serials are arranged alphabetically following the system of the *World List of Scientific Periodicals*.[52]

In 1960, the library spent $8,600 on books, periodicals and binding. This amount is obviously inadequate to make all the necessary book and periodical purchases. The result is that references that are required are not always available in the library and have to be borrowed from other libraries, such as those of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Singapore; the Rubber Research Institute; the Department of Agriculture; and the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. Inadequate finance has also prevented the library from purchasing the necessary visible-index system, up-to-date photocopying equipment, microfilm-readers and book-pockets.[53]

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[48] Ilse Tay, *Personal Communication*, 12th March, 1962.

[49] Tay, *MLJ*, 1(2):15–16, January 1961.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[51] Tay, *Personal Communication*.

[52] *Ibid.*

It is a pity that the authorities of the I.M.R. are still blind to the needs of the library. It was until the establishment of the University of Malaya Medical Library the only medical library in the whole of Malaya, and yet was shamefully neglected. The librarian has aptly remarked that

> With the increase of teaching programmes on Public Health, and the expansion of the Medical Services the urgency of the need for an increased intake of medical journals becomes apparent. It is hoped that in the not too distant future funds can be made available to allow for an extended library service, not only for officers of the Institute but perhaps also to all those who wish to keep abreast with the latest developments in the fields of public health and medicine.[54]

THE LIBRARY OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DEPARTMENT

The Geological Survey Department was established in 1903 with the appointment of the first Government Geologist, Mr. J.B. Scrivenor. In the early years of its existence it was the Cinderella of the Government Departments, being understaffed and inadequately financed. It was not until 1939, following the publication of Sir L.L. Fermor's "Report Upon the Mining Industry of Malaya" that the importance of a strong Geological Survey was acknowledged. However, the outbreak of the war, and the subsequent Communist rebellion prevented the further expansion of the Department. In 1950, a generous grant was received under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, and this enabled the re-organization of the Geological Survey to be finally carried out and for a new headquarters to be built in Ipoh, Perak.[55]

The Department possessed a small reference collection as early as 1903. In the early years, however, the library's fortunes fluctuated in sympathy with the Department's finance. Until 1956, the library occupied a small room in the wooden headquarters building of the Department in Batu Gajah, Perak. When the new Geological Survey headquarters building was occupied in 1956, a specially designed room was allocated to the library.[56]

The library was managed by a library clerk under the general supervision of the Director until 1960 when a full-time librarian, a University graduate, was appointed. Until recently, for purposes of salary, the librarian was in the clerical grade. But this position has been up-graded.[57]

The library has 15,000 bound volumes and currently receives 46 periodicals, which cover all aspects of geology and inorganic chemistry. It is classified by the "Decimal" classification.[58] A card catalogue is in preparation.

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[53] *Ibid.*

[54] Tay, *MLJ*, 1(2):16, January 1961.

[55] Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961*, p. 270.

[56] J.B. Alexander, Director of Geological Survey, Federation of Malaya, *Personal Communication*, 3rd May, 1962.

[57] *Ibid.*

The library is only available for reference, although duplicate copies of works are occasionally lent. Use of the library is limited to the departmental staff who number about 150. At present the services provided by the library are rather limited. This is to be expected seeing that expenditure on the library exclusive of staff salaries averages about $2,500 per annum. The library has no photocopying equipment or microtext readers.[59]

THE LIBRARIES OF THE MALAYAN FOREST DEPARTMENT

Introductory. The Malayan Forest Department functions in exactly the same manner as the Department of Agriculture, and comes under the aegis of the same minister. Each State maintains its own department with senior staff drawn from a federal cadre; the Chief Conservator in Kuala Lumpur is the professional head of the service and is responsible for co-ordination and research. There is a well-equipped research organization at Kepong, a few miles from Kuala Lumpur. Although the subject of forestry is a State matter, technical advice given federally must be acted on by the officers attached for duty in the State. The Department issues a technical journal, the *Malayan Forester*, as well as a number of technical publications which appear in the *Malayan Forest Record Series.*

The Library of the Forest Research Institute. Although a Forest Department had existed in the Malayan Peninsula since 1901 with the appointment of a Chief Forest Officer, it was not until 1925 that a research branch, called the Forest Research Institute, was established at Kepong, about ten miles from Kuala Lumpur. The present main building was completed and occupied in 1929.[60]

The library appears to have been started in 1929 when a part of the library at the Departmental headquarters was transferred to the Institute. The first catalogue was prepared by a senior officer, Mr. F.S. Walker, and completed in 1933. At this time, the library contained nearly 3,000 bound volumes and nearly forty standard periodicals on forestry.[61]

The library suffered some losses during the war years through looting. But in the period of reconstruction following the war, most of the looted items were replaced, so that by 1950 the library had over 4,000 volumes, including a number of complete runs of pre-war serials.[62]

Before 1953, the library was run by a library clerk under the general supervision of a senior officer of the Research Institute. However, the expansion of the library's stock and activities eventually made the old system of running the library impracticable. Moreover, in 1952 a branch library was set up in the Timber Research Laboratory of the Institute, comprising nearly 2,000 reprints, reports, bulletins, pamphlets and other material. The addition of the Pulp and Paper Laboratory to the Institute necessitated still further expansion of the library and its activities. Consequently, in 1953 a full-time librarian, Mr. K.P.V. Menon, a science graduate, was employed. Mr. Menon is still librarian of the Forest Research Institute.[63]

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[58] The library actually uses the classification scheme of the U.S. Geological Survey.

[59] Alexander, *Personal Communication.*

[60] K.P.V. Menon, "The Malayan Forest Department Libraries at the Forest Research Institute and at Headquarters," *MLJ*, 2(4):140, July 1962.

[61] *Ibid.*

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

Under Mr. Menon's able administration "acquisitions were stepped up, subscription lists were increased, and wider international exchange-relationships were established."[64] Greater attention was also paid towards the binding of various sets of unbound journals, which had accumulated through the years.[65] By the end of 1960, the library's stock had more than doubled that in 1950, and stood at 8,500 bound volumes, of which only a small proportion were textbooks.[66]

The library subscribes to some 124 periodicals covering all aspects of forestry, forest products and their utilisation, botany, and plant ecology. It stocks all the publications of the Malayan Forest Department, including the *Malayan Forest Record Series* (first published in 1912), the *Malayan Forester*, a journal which began publication in August 1931, and the monthly *Headquarters Bulletin*. It also has a complete set of the *Forest Research Pamphlets*, begun in 1953 by the Forest Research Institute.[67]

The library is classified according to the Oxford System of Decimal Classification, which was adopted by the Congress of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) in 1953 for use in forestry libraries. A small section of non-forestry material, covering physics, engineering, chemistry and statistics, is classified by U.D.C.[68]

The library is still very small by world standards. In 1960, only $3,700 were spent on books, periodicals and binding. The library occupies a small room in the main block of the Forest Research Institute and has seating for twelve readers. It is at present used by some 100 people, not all of whom belong to the staff of the Forest Research Institute. The librarian appears to maintain a very liberal lending policy, and permits any interested person to use the library's facilities.[69]

The library provides only a very limited service for its clients. An interdepartmental abstract, called the *Abstracts of Current Forestry Literature*, was started in 1932, but was discontinued in 1956, when the library began subscribing to the Commonwealth Forestry Bureau's *Forestry Abstracts*.[70] The library despatches the Institute's *Forest Research Pamphlets* to some 270 international institutions and individual research workers,[71] and provides a photocopying service, using a Vielsweck model for copying documents and microfilming, and a Rutherstat machine for copying small documents. It does not possess any microtext readers.[72]

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[63] *Ibid.* [64] *Ibid.* [65] *Ibid.*

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[67] K.P.V. Menon, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[68] *Ibid.*

[69] *Ibid.* A new library building was being planned.

[70] Menon, *MLJ*, 2(4):140, July 1962.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 141.

The Headquarters Library. In addition to the library at the Forest Research Institute, there is another library maintained by the Forest Department at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. This library was founded in 1901, but its early history, according to Menon, is "shrouded in oblivion."[73]

Care and maintenance of the library were formerly under the charge of a clerk, who was responsible for the circulation of periodicals and the recording of loans, in addition to other clerical duties. In 1953, however, a full-time librarian, Mr. J.J. Souri, was appointed, and he has been in charge of the library since.[74]

The library was first catalogued in 1959, at which date its collection was found to contain "4,000 items, about one-third of which form standard reference works in forestry and forest products, and the remainder overseas Annual Reports, Pamphlets, Bulletins and other material of special interest to the Headquarters, such as Laws, Legislation and Enactments."[75]

It is still a comparatively small library, and no future developments are anticipated since it is intended to serve the departmental staff only. The library was moved to its present quarters in 1961, when the Departmental headquarters was shifted from its former site on the Court Hill to its present location in Swettenham Road, as an integral part of the Ministry of Agriculture.

THE LIBRARY OF THE DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT

The Drainage and Irrigation Department was formed in 1932 following the acceptance by the Government of the recommendations of the Rice Cultivation Committee appointed in 1930. The Committee among other things recommended the establishment of a Drainage and Irrigation Department to carry out large scale irrigation schemes in order to help increase rice production.[76]

It is believed that in the early years there was a small departmental collection. But this clearly did not amount to much for as late as 1957, it was reported that the library had only 500 bound volumes, and 20 current periodicals.[77] Indeed, at that time the collection was not housed in any special room, and it was not until 1960 that a room was allocated to the library in the old headquarters of the Drainage and Irrigation Department, at the Suleiman Building, Kuala Lumpur.[78]

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[72] Menon, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.*

[73] Menon, *MLJ*, 2(4):142, July 1962.

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961*, pp. 237–38.

[77] Tay, *MLGN*, 2(2):35, December 1957.

[78] Malaya, Department of Drainage and Irrigation, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

The Drainage and Irrigation Department was shifted to a new building at Swettenham Road, Kuala Lumpur, in April 1961. The library is now housed in an attractive room in this new building. According to a count made in 1960, it possessed 4,460 bound volumes and 33 current technical journals, as well as a large number of reprint articles from various engineering journals, and research pamphlets on hydraulics, hydrology and irrigation. The library is still in the rudimentary stage of development. It has no full-time library staff. Responsibility for the ordering of books and periodicals rests with the Engineer-in-Charge, while the actual library routines are carried out by a junior technician in addition to his normal duties. Expenditure on the library in 1960 totalled $2,000. The library's stock is not classified.[79]

The library is purely for reference and serves a departmental staff of about 170.[80]

THE LIBRARIES OF THE MUSEUMS DEPARTMENT

The Museums Department, under the direction of the Director of Museums, Federation of Malaya, is a very small department. At present it is responsible for maintaining the National Museum, Kuala Lumpur, and the Perak Museum in Taiping. Only the National Museum and the Perak Museum have libraries.

The National Museum. The National Museum was established in 1954 in temporary quarters on the site of the old Selangor Museum, which was destroyed by Allied bombing during the war.[81] A new building was completed recently to house the collection of the National Museum.[82]

Until the establishment of the National Archives, the National Museum was responsible for preserving the public records of the Federal Government, and was the official depository of all books, pamphlets, journals and other material published in Malaya, with the exception of Government publications.[83] In addition it maintains a small reference library of approximately 1,478 bound volumes, and an unknown number of unbound material.[84] These cover all aspects of the literature relating to Malaya as well as include some technical books relevant to the work of the Museum, particularly in the fields of archaeology and anthropology.[85] Among the library's collection number several valuable pre-18th century books and maps, dealing directly or indirectly with the Malay Peninsula. The earliest book in the collection is a travel work by the Italian Lodovico Varthema, which contains a description of his visit to old Malacca in 1506 and was published in Milan in 1511.[86]

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] *World of Learning, 1960/61* (London: Europa, 1961), p. 692.

[82] Mubin Sheppard, Director of Museums, *Personal Communication*, 2nd March, 1961.

[83] P.D.R. Williams-Hunt and E.F.S. Buxton, "Early Malayan Books and Maps in the Archives Section of the National Museum, Kuala Lumpur (June 1953)," *MHJ*, 1:128, December 1954.

[84] Sheppard, *Personal Communication.*

[85] Williams-Hunt and Buxton, *MHJ*, 1:128, December 1954.

[86] Lodovico Varthema, *Novum Itinerarium Aethiopiae: Aegipti utriusque Arabiae, Siriae: ac Indiae intra et extra Gangem.* Milan 1511.

The library's facilities are only made available to research students and senior government officers, who must obtain permission from the Curator (now Director) of Museums. The actual library duties are carried out by the librarian under the supervision of the Curator. Expenditure on the library in 1960 exclusive of staff salaries was $1,132.[87]

The Perak Museum, Taiping. The Perak Museum was founded in 1883, and possesses a good collection of antiquities, ethnographical, zoological and geological material and economic products. It houses the Perak archives as well as a small reference library of 2,500 books. No current periodicals are received by the library. Any future expansion will be concentrated on the National Museum library.[88]

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

The Department of Chemistry is headed by a Director who is administratively responsible to the Minister of Home Affairs. The services and advice of the Department are available to all Government departments. The Department has laboratories in Petaling Jaya (near Kuala Lumpur) and Penang.[89]

The Department maintains a small library of 1,500 bound volumes, and currently receives 24 periodicals. It has no full-time librarian or library clerk. The library is generally not open to the public and serves a departmental staff of 114. As the Department of Chemistry may be expanded into a National Chemical Laboratory in the near future, it is likely that its present small collection will grow into something more respectable.[90]

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Library is a small departmental collection of 1,172 bound volumes. It currently subscribes to 45 technical periodicals and is looked after by a library clerk. The collection is classified according to the Dewey Decimal Classification. The library provides a photocopying service. Expenditure on the library exclusive of staff salaries was $1,500 in 1960.[91]

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

The Department has about 1,000 books, which are kept in three large cupboards. A Town Planning Assistant has been delegated with the responsibility of keeping the library records in addition to his other duties in the office. There are other such similar collections in the various State Planning Offices.[92]

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[87] Sheppard, *Personal Communication.*

[88] *Ibid.*

[89] Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961*, p. 77.

[90] A. Frugtniet, *Personal Communication*, 1st March, 1961.

[91] W.J. Plumbe, "Scientific Information Facilities in Malaya," *MLJ*, 1(3):19–28, April 1961.

[92] Tan Soo Hai, *Personal Communication*, 10th March, 1961.

THE LIBRARY OF THE VETERINARY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

This small library serves a small departmental staff. The collection of 859 bound volumes is not classified by any known system. The library is under the charge of a clerk who devotes a part of his time to the library. Expenditure on the library in 1960 was $700.[93]

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (RESEARCH DIVISION)

This library is still very small, consisting as it does of 367 bound volumes, because it was only started recently. The classification scheme used is U.D.C. Expenditure in 1960 exclusive of staff salaries was $2,200.[94]

(ii) Non-Scientific Libraries

There are only three non-scientific special libraries of note in Malaya. These are the libraries of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Agency), the Department of Information Services, and the Department of Broadcasting.

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEWAN BAHASA DAN PUSTAKA

The Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Language and Literature Agency) was incorporated in 1959 with the objects of

> developing and enriching the national language [Malay]; printing and publishing literature in the national language and in other languages; standardising spelling and pronunciation; devising appropriate technical terms in the national language; and preparing and publishing a national language dictionary.[95]

To facilitate the work of the Officials of the Dewan Bahasa, there has been built up a large collection of books. At the end of 1960, there were approximately 11,000 books, of which 7,000 were in the Malay language, covering all fields of knowledge. There were, in addition, 3,500 books in English and 500 in other languages, covering mainly the fields of language, education, history and culture of South-East Asia.[96]

The library is largely a departmental collection. But the present librarian, Tuan Syed Ahmad bin Ali[97] stated in 1960 that he planned to increase the scope of the library so that it would eventually perform the following functions:[98]

1. To collect all books and materials relating to the study of the Malay language, literature and culture, written in any language.

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[93] See Plumbe, *MLJ*, 1(3):19–28, April 1961.

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] Malaya, *Official Year Book*, *1961*, p. 213.

[96] Syed Ahmad bin Ali, "Peranan Perpustakaan Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka pada masa hadapan," *MLJ*, 1(1):26, October 1960.

[97] Tuan Syed Ahmad has worked in Libraries for ten years. He began his career in the Penang Library, and subsequently worked in the USIS Library, Kuala Lumpur. Since March, 1959, he has been the librarian of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

[98] Syed Ahmad, *MLJ*, 1(1):26, October 1960.

2. To collect all books written in the national language, wherever published.

3. To acquire all old Malay manuscripts, whether in their original form, or by making copies of them.

4. To provide a reference service on all matters relating to the Malay language, literature and culture on a national scale.

5. To publish from time to time a bibliography on books written in the national language.

6. To provide a public library service of books in the national language on a national scale utilizing the postal system, and static branch and mobile libraries.

THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION SERVICES

The Department maintains a reference library at its headquarters office in Kuala Lumpur, as well as a number of reading rooms scattered throughout the country.

The Reference Library. The Reference Library of the Department of Information Services was founded in 1950. The actual number of volumes or items in the library is not known but the collection comprises "general books, government reports, government gazettes, legislative assembly reports and a fair number of books on Malaya."[99] A collection of newspaper clippings on a variety of subjects is kept. A quarterly list of new additions to the library is issued to the departmental staff. The stock is classified by Dewey, and there is "an alphabetical subject catalogue."[100]

The library is administered by a Research Librarian who is assisted by a clerk and an office boy. The present Research Librarian is a university graduate.

The Reading Rooms. A number of Reading Rooms were established by the Department of Information Services (formerly the Public Relations Office, Federation of Malaya and Singapore) shortly after the war in 1946.[101] They were intended to popularize the Department's publications among the people of the smaller towns, and probably to meet the ideological threat of the Communists during the Emergency. At the height of the Emergency, there were as many as 125 Reading Rooms scattered throughout Malaya. These were gradually reduced in number as the Communist threat decreased, and today there are only thirteen reading rooms located in the following States.[102]

Johore	1
Kedah	2
Kelantan	2

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[99] Malaya, Department of Information Services, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[100] *Ibid.*

[101] J.N. McHugh, Director of Public Relations, Federation of Malaya, "Text of a broadcast over Radio Malaya, 12th May, 1950."

[102] K.C. Arun, Head of External Affairs Division, Department of Information, *Personal Communication*, 10th April, 1962.

Negri Sembilan	4
Pahang	1
Penang	1
Perlis	1
Trengganu	1

The annual expenditure on these reading rooms is about $13,000. They are stocked mainly with vernacular newspapers, policy booklets, pamphlets, wall sheets, posters and magazines issued by the Department in Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English. In most cases supervisors or caretakers maintain the reading rooms. In Kota Tinggi (Johore), the Information Department staff are in charge of the reading room.[103]

THE LIBRARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BROADCASTING

The Department of Broadcasting, also popularly known as Radio Malaysia, maintains a reference library at its headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. The collection is still very small and consists of 1,055 books and 62 bound volumes of periodicals. The library currently receives 78 serials. The collection is classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification. A special room was recently allocated for the library, which is at present managed by a staff of two, including the reference librarian.[104]

(iii) Conclusion

The above survey reveals several deficiencies in the existing provision of special libraries in Malaya. These may be summarized as follows:

1. Almost all the libraries lack adequate and experienced staff.
2. Most of the libraries suffer from inadequate funds and so are prevented from purchasing all the essential books and periodicals, and library equipment.
3. Accommodation is generally poor and unsuitable.
4. With the possible exception of the Rubber Research Institute, the services given by the libraries are of the minimum.
5. Not all the libraries are catalogued and classified.
6. Although most of the libraries can make use of departmental photocopying units, or possess their own photocopying equipment, none of them possess any microtext readers. Even the Department of Agriculture which has a small microfilm collection has no reader of its own. The Institute for Medical Research used to own one, but this is now unusable.
7. Nearly all the scientific libraries are still very deficient in books, retrospective sets of journals, and other materials necessary to provide a scientific information service. The effectiveness of the Department of Agriculture Library—the largest special library in Malaya—is reduced by the dispersal of its stock into small collections in the various research divisions of the Department.

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[103] *Ibid.*

[104] T. Chew, Reference Librarian, Department of Broadcasting, *Personal Communication*, 11th November, 1962.

8. All the above defects of the special libraries are accentuated by the lack of a union list of serials which can help to eliminate excessive duplication and facilitate inter-library lending. The only union list of serials in Malaysia is the out-of-date *Catalogue of journals devoted to mathematics, physics, chemistry, engineering and allied subjects* compiled on behalf of the Committee on Physical Science of the Pan-Malayan Advisory Council (now defunct) in 1954. Doubtless there are extensive duplications in the collections of the Department of Agriculture, the Forest Research Institute, and the Rubber Research Institute.

C. *Singapore*

(i) Introductory

Compared with West Malaysia, Singapore has comparatively few special libraries. This may be because she is already adequately served by the special collections of the National Library, the Nanyang University, the University of Singapore, which has the best scientific and medical library in Singapore, and the Singapore Polytechnic. Generally speaking, Singapore's special libraries fall into two main groups: non-government and government libraries.

(ii) Non-Government Libraries

Singapore has very few special libraries which are not supported by public funds. However, some industrial and commercial firms maintain small collections of house journals, technical manuals and periodicals, and reference material. The larger firms receive quite a large number of periodicals by subscription, exchange or donation: for example, Hume Industries (350 titles), the Borneo Company (300 titles), United Engineers (80 titles), Eastern Kodak (72 titles) and Coates Brothers (28 titles).[105] The periodicals are usually circulated among the senior staff only, and the records are kept by clerical staff. Many firms also possess photocopying equipment. The following is a sample list: Metal Box (Contoura); Hume (Thermofax); Fraser & Neave (Thermofax); Eastman Kodak (Kodak); Industrial Gases (Lumoprint Photocopier); McAlister (Kodak Verifax); National Carbon (Thermofax); United Engineers (make not given); and Champion Motors (Thermofax).[106]

As Singapore possesses relatively few secondary industries, and as her economy is based principally on her commerce, it is not surprising to find that she does not possess any large industrial libraries. What is surprising is the fact that she does not possess any important commercial library. A Commercial and Technical Library in the National Library, has been established. It possesses a large number of trade directories and buyers' guides, census and trade statistics of all Commonwealth and major foreign countries, Bentley's Telegraph Codes, Marconi's International Register, books on management, secretarial practice, costs and accounting, office equipment and appliances, and a number of periodicals on economics and business.

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[105] H. Anuar, "Scientific Information Facilities in Singapore," *SLJ*, 1(2):47, October 1961.
[106] *Ibid.*, p. 49.

The U.S. Consul General recently (May 1962) opened a Commercial Library in Singapore. This library, however, has a rather limited scope, and is merely intended "to assist Singapore businessmen to expand or initiate trade contacts with the United States."[107] It is claimed that the library "contains the most current and extensive collection of American trade directories and trade journals in Singapore."[108] The library is open daily from Monday to Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and is in the charge of a locally employed "Commercial Librarian."[109]

(iii) Government Libraries

As in Malaysia, most of Singapore's special libraries are attached to Government departments. These libraries, however, are generally small, and most of them do not have collections of more than a few hundred volumes. The reason for this is simple. The various Government departments need not build up extensive collections because they can rely on the National Library to provide them with the necessary reference facilities. Consequently, most of them maintain only token collections, which consist largely of departmental reports and the relevant ordinances administered by the departments. Of the special libraries attached to Government departments, only five merit special mention. These are the libraries of the Botanic Gardens, the National Museum, the Housing and Development Board, the Malayan Meteorological Service, and the Political Study Centre.

THE LIBRARY OF THE BOTANIC GARDENS, SINGAPORE

The Botanic Gardens, in addition to being a popular park, is the centre of research for Malaysian botany and tropical horticulture. It was the pioneering research on Para rubber carried out in the Botanic Gardens which led to the foundation of Malaya's rubber industry, and in fact to Hevea planting in South-East Asia.[110]

The present Botanic Gardens was founded in 1859 after two earlier attempts had failed. The first attempt to establish a Botanic Gardens was made by Nathaniel Wallich, M.D., Ph.D., then Superintendent of the Botanic Gardens at Calcutta, but this establishment was discontinued in June 1829 because of lack of financial support from the Indian Government.[111] Another attempt was made in 1836 when an agri-horticultural society was formed, but this society appears to have become defunct by 1846.[112]

In 1859, a fresh move was made to start an Agri-Horticultural Society. A piece of land, 60 acres in area, was acquired in the Tanglin district, and members were enrolled on paying an entrance fee and a monthly subscription.[113] In 1866, the Government gave the Society an additional 55 acres and promised the Society an annual grant of $1,200 if the public were admitted free to the Society's gardens. Even with this grant, the Society soon found itself in financial difficulties, and on 13th August 1874 asked the Government to take over its gardens and settle the Society's debt of $5,000. This the Government agreed to do, and the transfer of the Society's gardens to the Government was effected on 7th November, 1874.[114]

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[107] "New U.S. Consulate General Commercial Library Opens," *Bull. USIS, Singapore,* 2(5):14, May 1962.

[108] *Ibid.*

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):44, October 1961.

[111] G.E. Brooke, "Botanic Gardens and Economic Notes," *One Hundred Years of Singapore...* ed. W. Makepeace, G.E. Brooke, and Roland St. J. Braddell (London: Murray, 1921), II, pp. 65–67.

[112] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

For a short time the Botanic Gardens was placed under the temporary control of the Curator of the Raffles Library and Museum, Dr. James Collins.[115] But in 1876, the first Superintendent of the Botanic Gardens, Mr. Henry James Murton of the Kew Gardens was appointed.[116]

The foundations of the present library were laid by Mr. Murton, who ordered a set of "standard works" costing about £13 sterling from England, when he assumed office.[117] During the administration of Mr. H.N. Ridley, who was appointed the first Director of the Botanic Gardens in 1888, several valuable books were acquired through purchase, gifts and exchange. Among the library's donors have been the Raffles Library, the Kew Gardens, the British Museum, and the French and U.S.A. governments. By 1897, the library had about 1,040 books.[118] However, after this date the library was largely neglected although books and periodicals continued to be purchased. New works remained uncatalogued and were allowed to pile up in a haphazard order in stacks at the top of the herbarium. It was not until 1955 that the deterioration of the books caused by the damp and insects resulted in the decision to house the library in a new air-conditioned building and to appoint a librarian to catalogue the books.

The first librarian appointed to re-organize the collection was Mrs. D.S. Johnson, B.Sc. (Lond.), Ph.D. (Lond.). Mrs. Johnson classified and indexed the library according to U.D.C. because she found that the majority of the books belonged to classes 58 (Botany) and 63 (Agriculture). About 10% of the collection comprised floras. The stock of the library at this time totalled 7,308 bound volumes and about 1,000 volumes which had either never been bound or needed rebinding. Two-thirds of the bound volumes were periodicals, the rest consisted of books, floras, monographs and bound reprints.[119]

The library currently (October 1961) receives 258 serials: 33 by subscription, 218 by exchange, and 7 by donation.[120] Many of the work in the collection are extremely valuable, and in the words of A. Johnson, will delight "any botanist, horticulturist, agriculturalist, or forester."[121] The oldest book in the library consists of two works by Paulus Aeginetes: the *Pharmaca sim-*

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[113] *Ibid.*, p. 72.
[114] *Ibid.*, p. 75.
[115] *Ibid.*
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[117] A. Johnson, "The Library of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore," *MLGN*, 1(2):27, October 1955.
[118] *Ibid.*
[119] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[120] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):47, October 1961.
[121] Johnson, *MLGN*, 1(2):27, October 1955.

plica (a herbal describing all the plants which Paulus used in his medical practice in Greece in the third century A.D.) translated by Otto Brunfelsius; and the *De ratione victus* (a discussion on the types of food which should be consumed for a normal way of life) translated by Gulielmo Copo Basili; both of which were published together in one volume in Strasburg, September, 1531. Other valuable works include Georg Meister's *Der orientalis-indische Kunst—und Lustgartner* (published in 1692); all three editions of Bianco's *Flore de Filipinas;* the *Encyclopedie methodique* by Jean Baptiste Antoine Lamarck (published Paris, 1783–1817); and the complete series of *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, first published in 1787.

The library has complete sets of all the publications of the Botanic Gardens. These include the *Agricultural Bulletin of the Malay Peninsula*, which appeared between 1891 and 1900; the *Agricultural Bulletin of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States*, which was first published in 1901, but was discontinued in 1912 when the Department of Agriculture, Federated Malay States, began to bring out its own journal (eventually renamed the *Malayan Agricultural Journal*). The Botanic Gardens has, however, continued to publish its research in the *Gardens' Bulletin*.[122]

A number of important works have been published as a result of the study of the Malaysian flora undertaken by the staff of the Botanic Gardens. These include Ridley's *Flora of the Malay Peninsula* (published in 1922–25); Corner's *Wayside Trees of Malaya*, Henderson's *Malayan Wild Flowers*, Henderson and Addison's *Malayan Orchid Hybrids*, and Holttum's *Orchids of Malaya* and *Ferns of Malaya*. Holttum's two works constitute volumes one and two respectively of the *Revised Flora of Malaya*, still in the process of publication.[123]

The Botanic Gardens Library is a reference library. Its facilities are generally available only to the departmental staff, but other individuals and institutions can make use of its resources through inter-library lending.

THE SINGAPORE NATIONAL MUSEUM

The National Museum was officially established in 1960.[124] Prior to that it was known as the Raffles Museum, which was established in 1874 as a government department together with the Raffles Library. Until the two institutions were separated administratively in 1955, the Raffles Library functioned both as Museum library and public library.

When the two institutions became separated under two different Directors, a part of the collection of the Raffles Library was transferred to the Museum. This consisted largely of works of natural history, anthropology, archaeology and prehistory. The Museum now (1961) has a collection of some 7,000 volumes and receives about 300 current periodicals.[125]

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[122] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):44, October 1961.

[123] *Ibid.*

[124] Singapore, Legislative Assembly, Laws, Statutes, etc. *Raffles Museum (Change of Name) Ordinance (No. 67 of 1960).*

[125] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):47, October 1961.

Current Museum publications include its *Bulletin*, which was first published in 1928 in two series, Series A, Zoological, and Series B, Anthropological. The latter has now been discontinued. The Museum also publishes occasional *Memoirs* (covering anthropology, history and prehistory), and some numbers in the series of *Malayan Museum Pamphlets*, the rest being published by the National Museum, Kuala Lumpur.

The National Museum possesses several retrospective sets of important journals. These include: *Asiatic Researches*, 1799–1839; *Journal Asiatique*, 1846–; the *Transactions* of the Linnean Society of London, 1791–; *Zoological Record*, 1864–; and the *Proceedings* of the Zoological Society of London, 1832–.[126]

THE LIBRARY OF THE HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD, SINGAPORE

The Housing and Development Board was established by legislation in 1959 for the purpose of taking over the housing and development functions of the Singapore Improvement Trust. The latter had been established as a corporate body in 1927 under the Singapore Improvement Ordinance for the improvement and planning of Singapore. However, in the post-war years it developed into little more than a housing authority to the detriment of its improvement and planning activities. To regularise this position, two Ordinances were passed in 1959 for the setting up of the Housing Development Board and a Planning Authority respectively to take over the functions previously vested in the Singapore Improvement Trust which was to be dissolved when these two Ordinances came into operation.[127] The Housing and Development Board Ordinance came into operation in 1960.

A reference library to assist the Board in its work was established in February 1961. The library is a part of the Secretariat Department of the Board and is controlled by the Public Relations and Advisory Committee.[128]

At present (1962) the library has no professional staff, and is under the charge of the Secretarial Assistant. The library routines are carried out by a library clerk. The Secretarial Assistant is a member of the Singapore Library Association and maintains close liaison with the librarians of the National Library, the University of Singapore Library and the Polytechnic Library.[129]

The library has about 3,000 volumes of books and periodicals covering subjects such as building construction, architecture and civil engineering. There are also a few books on administration, law and finance. The library subscribes to 20 periodicals. Expenditure on books and periodicals in 1961 totalled nearly $10,000.[130]

The library is classified by U.D.C., and its card catalogues comprise a classified catalogue, an author catalogue, and a subject index. It maintains a file of newspaper clippings on the Board's activities, as well as pictures of progress in the Board's building work, of buildings completed by the Board and other activities.[131]

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[126] *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

[127] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959* (Singapore: Govt. Printers, 1961), pp. 84–85.

[128] Goh Soo Peng, *Personal Communication*, 27th April, 1962.

[129] *Ibid.*

[130] *Ibid.*

The library is only open during office hours. As it is maintained solely for the use of the Board's staff, who number about 400, its books are not lent directly to outside persons. However, books may be borrowed through inter-library lending. The library has access to the photocopying equipment of the Board's Building Department, and also to the Government Survey Department's Microfilm unit for microfilms and positive enlargements. But it has no microtext readers. The library's accommodation is satisfactory. It has seating capacity for 24 people and shelving space for another 2,500 volumes.[132]

THE LIBRARY OF THE MALAYAN METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE

Until 9th August, 1965, the Malayan Meteorological Service was a pan-Malayan department financed jointly by the Governments of the Federation of Malaya and the State of Singapore. It maintained 10 "first order" meteorological stations and 43 auxiliary stations in the Federation of Malaya, and one "first order" station in Singapore. The main Meteorological Office and the Upper Air Observatory were in Singapore.[133]

The Service had a small library at its headquarters, which comprised about 174 books, 234 bound volumes of periodicals and hundreds of monthly meteorological data from almost all the countries of the world. The library was run by an officer of the Department, appointed by the Director. Expenditure in 1961, exclusive of staff salaries, was $6,000.[134]

The library had complete sets of the Department's publications, which included the *Annual Summary of Observations, Annual Frequency Tables and Anemogram Analysis, Annual Upper Air Data, Monthly Pilot Balloon Data,* the *Memoirs* of the Department, and the *Monthly Abstract of Meteorological Observations.*[135]

THE LIBRARY OF THE SINGAPORE CIVIL SERVICE POLITICAL STUDY CENTRE

The Political Study Centre was inaugurated by the socialist People's Action Party government in August, 1959, to conduct courses in political science for Singapore civil servants. Its main aim, according to the Prime Minister, was to keep civil servants informed "of the acute problems which confront any popularly elected Government in a revolutionary situation," and thereby made the administration "more sensitive and responsive to the needs and mood of the people."[136]

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[131] *Ibid.*
[132] *Ibid.*
[133] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959*, p. 263.
[134] Foong Sze Fook, *Personal Communication*, 11th April, 1962.
[135] *Ibid.*
[136] Quoted in Singapore, *Annual Report*, 1959, p. 44.

Housed at Goodwood Hill, the Study Centre was headed by a Director, who was a civil servant, and was provided with lecture and seminar rooms, a reading room and a library. The library was a small one, comprising about 500 books on political science and thought, economics and international affairs, particularly with reference to Asia. It was managed by the staff of the Political Study Centre, and was available for lending to all civil servants.[137]

(iv) Conclusion

Much of what has been said about the special libraries of Malaya with regard to the lack of trained staff, inadequate finance, poor library accommodation, and weak collections apply to Singapore's special libraries. However, unlike Malaya where lack of a national library system makes it essential for the libraries to be self-sufficient, so to speak, the special libraries in Singapore can always fall back on the resources of the National Library, and in the last resort, on the libraries of the two universities in Singapore and other educational institutions.

The small island does not present so many problems of inter-library lending as the greater distances of Malaya do. Furthermore, the National Library is beginning to carry out its functions as a national bibliographical centre. It recently began compiling a union catalogue of scientific and technical periodicals in Government departmental libraries. In addition, being the depository library for all Singapore's publications and to a large extent those of Malaya's as well, the National Library will be responsible in the future for a national bibliography.

[137] G.G. Thomson, Director of Training, Singapore Civil Service Political Study Centre, *Personal Communication*, 8th May, 1962.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATIONAL LIBRARIES IN MALAYA AND SINGAPORE

A. *Definition*

By "educational libraries" is meant the libraries attached to educational institutions, such as schools, colleges and universities.

B. *Malaya*

In the absence of an organized public library system in Malaya, the educational libraries are sometimes the only libraries with which students come into contact. It is all the more deplorable that with the exception of the University of Malaya library all the educational libraries of Malaya suffer from inadequate finance, resources and trained staff.

The educational libraries of Malaya may, for convenience, be divided into two groups: (i) university and college libraries; and (ii) school libraries.

(i) University and College Libraries

Higher education in Malaya is provided by the University of Malaya, the Federal Technical College, and the Agricultural College at Serdang. In addition, there are a number of teachers' training colleges, the most important of which are the Language Institute, the Malayan Teachers' Training Colleges in Penang and Kuala Lumpur, the Sultan Idris Training College, and the Specialist Teachers' Training Institute.

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

Introductory. The University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, was officially inaugurated on the 1st of January, 1962. It had its origin in the earlier University of Malaya founded in Singapore in 1949. The latter began teaching in Kuala Lumpur in 1957, and in 1959 was split into two divisions—one in Kuala Lumpur, and the other in Singapore. On 1st January, 1962, the two divisions became separate universities—the one in Kuala Lumpur became the University of Malaya and the one in Singapore was renamed the University of Singapore.

Just as the Kuala Lumpur Division was an outgrowth of the Singapore university, so also the Kuala Lumpur library began as a part of the Singapore library. Between 1958 and 1959, before the appointment of a University Librarian in Kuala Lumpur, the Kuala Lumpur library was operated as a branch library. All cataloguing and ordering of books were done by the Singapore Division. A number of books was also transferred to Kuala Lumpur when the Faculty of Engineering, and the Departments of Geology, Malay Studies, and Indian Studies, were transferred to the Kuala Lumpur Division. For a time the library was under the charge of a graduate library assistant. Then in October, 1959, Mr. W.J. Plumbe, F.L.A., assumed control as Librarian of the Kuala Lumpur Division library. One of the first steps taken by the new Librarian was to detach the library from the control of the Singapore Division. This was achieved with the co-operation of the Singapore library, and from the beginning of 1960, the Kuala Lumpur library became independent and autonomous.[1]

Mr. Plumbe resigned in 1962 and was succeeded by Mr. Beda Lim, the present Librarian.

The Library Stock. In 1959, when Mr. Plumbe assumed control, the library's stock totalled about 10,000 volumes, most of which represented books transferred from Singapore. By the end of 1960, this had increased to 45,911 —an increase of more than 35,000 volumes in one year. Of this increase, only 7,000 volumes represented additional transfers from Singapore for the period 1959 to 1960, the rest being ordered and purchased directly by the Kuala Lumpur Division library. The growth was remarkable considering the fact that the library then possessed only three professionally qualified librarians (including the University Librarian) and a handful of graduate library assistants and clerks, and considering the fact that at that time most of the library staff were involved in recataloguing and reclassifying the books transferred from Singapore to the Bliss classification. In 1961, it proved impossible to maintain the same rate of growth "owing to the shortage of senior staff and clerks"[2] At the end of 1961, the total stock was 61,341 volumes, an increase of only 15,430 volumes over the previous year.

The headlong rush to build up a strong collection coupled with inadequate professional staff to cope with the processing of the books which poured into the library resulted in the accumulation of a huge backlog of uncatalogued items, which was not cleared until more than two years later. After 1961, the rate of growth was a more realistic one, being as follows:

Year	*Volumes*
1962	88,447
1963	112,907
1964	131,801
1965	159,162
1966	186,002
1967 (as at 24.10.67)	205,923

The library also rapidly increased its holdings of serials. In October, 1959, it subscribed to only 270 serial titles. At present, they number over 3,000.

The library has not confined its accessions to only conventional printed matter. It has a good collection of Malay manuscripts and has also begun to build up a collection of microtext material, notably in Malaysian studies and the history of South-East Asia. It has acquired with the aid of Asia Foundation grants microtext copies of all Malay and Minangkabau manuscripts in Leyden University, where a very large collection exists, and also of Malay manuscripts in England, Belgium and Germany.[3] According to the former Librarian, "the intention is to acquire a copy, on microfilm, of every manuscript in the Malay language that can be traced anywhere in the world."[4] Microfilm copies have also been obtained of such material as the *Sumatra Factory Records*, the *Java Factory Records*, and the *Straits Settlements Records*. The microtext collection is still small, but already facilities exist for its use. The Library has a number of microtext readers placed in study carrels, which can be used by research students and academic staff of the University.

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[1] W.J. Plumbe, "The Library of the University of Malaya," *MLJ*, 2(2):83–84, January 1962.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

Cataloguing and Classification. Until April, 1963, the Library was unique in that it was the only library in Malaysia, and possibly the world, using a "Stripdex" catalogue in place of the conventional card catalogue.[5]

The catalogue was a classified one, and the equipment employed comprised a revolving double-tiered "Roneodex" stand, each of which carried about 400 double-sided swinging panels about 8" wide. Each panel could hold between 80 to 120 individual strips, on which the catalogue entries were typed. It was claimed that this catalogue combined the advantages of the printed book catalogue with the flexibility and up-to-dateness of the card catalogue.[6] But it had several serious defects. The equipment was not only very costly, but occupied far more floor space than the conventional catalogue card cabinets. The strips were difficult to file, and there was no easy way of duplicating unit entries except by retyping each entry individually. For these and other reasons, it was decided to abandon the "Stripdex" catalogue in 1963. The existing catalogue is a card one, and unlike the "Stripdex" catalogue, is constructed on dictionary catalogue principles, with the alphabetical author/title sequence kept separated from the alphabetic subject sequence.

When the Library was established, the books were classified by the Bliss Bibliographic classification, because in the opinion of the former Librarian, "it is the major classification system best suited to academic requirements."[7] The classification was, however, modified to some extent "in accordance with the principles of facet analysis to achieve complete specificity."[8]

The modifications made to the Bliss classification, and particularly the introduction of notation without any known ordinal relationships, such as the stroke (/) and the colon (:), led to tremendous confusion in the shelf arrangement of the book stock. The then Chief Cataloguer who introduced the various new types of notation failed to take into consideration the fact that the attendants responsible for shelving the books were not a very literate lot who consequently could not understand the rather elaborate rules for shelve arrangement which had to be drawn up. The result was chaos in the stacks. This was one of the many reasons why a Special Committee was appointed by the University Council and Senate in October, 1961, to study the classification used in the library.

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[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

[5] Mr. Plumbe also introduced the "Stripdex" catalogue and the Bliss classification in the Library of Ahmadu Bello University, Northern Nigeria, when he became Librarian there after leaving the service of the University of Malaya. However, it has been reported that the Library is now in the process of converting to a card catalogue and reclassifying from Bliss to the Library of Congress scheme.

[6] W.J. Plumbe, "The 'Stripdex' Catalogue," *LAR*, 64:128–131, April 1962.

[7] Plumbe, *MLJ*, 2(2):84, January 1962.

[8] W.J. Plumbe, "Scientific Information Facilities in Malaya," *MLJ*, 1(3):23, April 1961.

After a series of meetings during which the views of the teaching staff were obtained the Committee reached the following conclusions:

(1) that on their intrinsic merits alone there is little to choose between one classification system and another,
(2) that the Library of Congress classification is more widely used than the Bliss classification,
(3) that there are advantages to be gained from using the Library of Congress classification which arise from the fact that it is maintained by a large organization and underwritten by the United States Government,
(4) that there is a further advantage to be gained from using the Library of Congress classification in that it is associated with a printed catalogue which serves as a classification aid; also an advantage is the fact that the schedules of this classification are continually being brought up-to-date,
(5) that it is desirable for the Library to use the Library of Congress classification in view of the possibility that the Library might come to be the apex of a nation-wide library system.

For the above reasons, the Committee recommended that a change should be made from the Bliss classification to that of the Library of Congress. The report of the Special Committee was brief to the point of being terse. But its minutes make very interesting reading and reveal the confusion that prevailed in the minds of the teaching staff between notation and classification, and between cataloguing and classification.

Nevertheless, the recommendation of the Special Committee was a sound one, and the University authorities accepted it. The programme of reclassification was begun in January, 1964, with the existing staff of the library who were asked to work overtime. The programme was completed on 16th May, 1964, and during this period of eighty-nine working days, 61,572 volumes were reclassified.

Building. The original library building which was occupied in June 1959, was a gift from the United Kingdom Government. It was basically a large rectangular room split into two levels by a mezzanine floor and covered an area of 11,500 square feet. It had seats for more than 100 readers in its two reading rooms and six microtext reading rooms for the use of research students and the academic staff. The original planners conceived the library as a branch of the Singapore library, and did not forsee that it would become an independent university library or that it would grow so rapidly. By 1962, the library was bulging at its seams. As a temporary measure, the less used books and periodicals were moved out of the library and stored in the various departments of the university. In addition, a seminar room in the Faculty of Arts building was converted into an air-conditioned store for bound periodicals, and reading rooms were established in the various departments.

In the meantime work was begun to extend the building. This second phase was completed in April 1963, and has seating accommodation for 500 readers and a stack capacity of 300,000 volumes. More detailed description of this building can be found in an article which the Librarian, Mr. Beda Lim, wrote for UNESCO.[9]

At the time of writing, plans have been completed for a third phase, which will comprise three floors, one of which will house the reference collection, another the current periodicals, and the third an overflow reading area. Provided that funds are available construction will commence in 1968.

Staff. In the initial period of its existence, the Library was constantly plagued by shortage of trained and professional staff. In 1959, it had a staff of 11, of whom only three were professional librarians. At the end of 1961, it still had only three professionally qualified librarians, although the number of its unqualified staff had increased to 34. To-day, the position has improved somewhat. Out of a staff establishment of 101, there are 22 posts in the professional grade, and of the staff holding positions in this grade 10 possess recognised professional qualifications.

Services. The Library is intended mainly for the use of the students and academic staff of the University. In the academic year 1961/62, these numbered 1,010 students and 120 teaching staff. To-day there are over 4,560 students and 360 teaching staff. Book issues in 1960/61 totalled 114,598 (including loans of books kept on "reserve"). In the 1966/67 session, they totalled 394,233.

During the academic terms, the library is open from 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m., Monday through Friday; from 8.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturday; and from 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on Sunday. During vacations, the library is open from 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. on Saturday.

The library provides a photocopying and reprographic service to teaching staff and students. Among the various types of reprographic equipment which the library possesses are the following:

Unicop contact photocopier
Xerox 1385 unit
Xerox 914 copier
Microfilm camera
Thermofax 'Filmac 100' microfilm reader-printer
Gestefax electronic scanner
Gestelith 200 offset duplicator
3M dry process photocopier (Medical Library)

Although the Library is still in the early stages of its development it possesses quite a great deal of sophisticated equipment. It also maintains a bindery. Being the largest library in Malaysia it is the only one in Malaysia where information on a variety of subjects can be obtained and because of the lack of a well developed library system in this country extensive use is made of the reference and information service not only by the university academic staff and students, but also by a large number of government departments, institutions and individuals. In some respects, the library also functions as a national library. It receives on deposit one copy of all material published in Malaysia and Singapore as well as all the publications of the Food and Agriculture organization and a number of UNESCO and United Nations publications. It is the depository library for the publications of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. In addition, it maintains a union catalogue of University of Singapore cards, a catalogue of Malaysiana, and a catalogue of Malay publications.

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[9] Beda Lim, "The University of Malaya Library Building," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries*, 19(4):199–201, July–August 1965.

The Medical Library. This library, which constitutes a division of the University library, was officially set up in January 1963, with the principal purpose of serving the proposed Medical centre which was to include the Faculty of Medicine and the Teaching hospital.

Initially the collection was housed in the main library, at which place the ordering and processing was and is still carried out. In April 1964, the Medical collection was moved to temporary premises in the Faculty of Medicine. At that time the collection numbered about 5,000 volumes and 460 periodical titles.

In the meantime, plans for the new Medical library building were drawn up. This building which forms part of the complex of buildings of the Medical centre was completed in 1965, and the Medical library began functioning from there in April of the same year.

Covering an area of about 35,000 square feet and with a stack capacity of 100,000 volumes and a seating capacity of 350, the library is the largest of its kind in Malaysia. The building comprises two wings connected by two corridors at either end. One wing houses the book collection and the other the periodical collection. In addition to two reading rooms, one in each wing, the library also has carrels for academic staff, and group study rooms as well as rooms for its history and archives, audio-visual and microtext collections.

The library has grown very rapidly since its inception and has now a collection of about 16,500 volumes and receives regularly 750 periodical titles. It not only serves the staff and students of the Faculty of Medicine, but also the staff of the Teaching Hospital, the students in the School of Nursing, and the medical community of Malaysia.

THE LIBRARY OF THE FEDERAL TECHNICAL COLLEGE (MAKTAB TEKNIK)

The Federal Technical College had its origin in the Public Works Department's Technical School started in October, 1925, in Brickfields Road, Kuala Lumpur, with the sole purpose of training technical assistants for its various technical departments. In 1930, this school was transferred to High Street where it began to accept non-Government and fee-paying private students.

The school was raised to the status of a college after the Second World War and in 1955 it moved to new premises at Gurney Road.[10]

The College is intended for pupils who have completed a full secondary education and provides a three-year course leading to a diploma. The College also provides courses leading to full professional qualifications in engineering, architecture and surveying. The Higher Education Planning Committee has recommended that the status of the Technical College should be raised to that of a university, and that it be known as the College of Technology. Initially, this new College would provide university level courses in architecture, surveying, town and country planning and engineering.[11]

The present library occupies a separate air-conditioned building and has a collection of nearly 20,000 volumes. It is classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification[12] and serves about 500 students and the teaching staff. No current figures on library expenditure are available, but expenditure on the library in 1960, exclusive of staff salaries, was $17,000.[13]

The Library has a full-time librarian, who is not professionally qualified and who for purposes of salary is graded on the Government clerical scale. The library has always been the Cinderella department of the College and will have to be greatly expanded if it is to serve its new role as part of the proposed College of Technology.

THE LIBRARY OF THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, SERDANG

The College of Agriculture was founded in 1931 as the School of Agriculture, at Serdang, a few miles from Kuala Lumpur. Its status was raised to that of a college in 1947. Until 1962, the College was a Federal institution administered by the Department of Agriculture for the primary purpose of training its technical staff as well as the staff of other government and quasi-government institutions.

On 1st January, 1962, however, the control of the College of Agriculture was transferred to the newly established Council of the College of Agriculture, which is an Authority of the University of Malaya.

The growth of the library reflected the changing status of the College. Initially, the library was administered as a branch of the Department of Agriculture library, although it was independently provided for from funds of the College.

It occupied a small room converted from a dormitory. In 1960, it was reported that the library was run by a staff of two, including a full-time library clerk, had a stock of 2,300 volumes and twenty-seven current periodicals. Expenditure in that year totalled $2,500.[14]

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[10] Maktab Teknik. *Prospectus, 1962–63* (Kuala Lumpur: 1962), pp. 1–2.

[11] *Report of the Higher Education Planning Committee* (Kuala Lumpur: 1967), pp. 227–228 (2d seq.)

[12] Plumbe, *MLJ*, 1(3):21–23, April 1961.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[14] Raja Shaharuzzaman bin Raja Hussein, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

The collection now stands at less than 10,000 volumes, and annual expenditure is in the region of $10,000. But a greater expansion of the library's resources is contemplated. Early in 1967, it was announced that the College would be greatly expanded in size to meet the growing needs of the country in the field of agricultural education.

Included in the College's expansion programme is a new library with a seating capacity of 200. Recently, the Ford Foundation, as part of its programme of aid to the College, sent a library consultant to Serdang for a short period to advise on the planning of the new library. The post of librarian on a salary scale recognised by the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia as an adequate one for professional librarians has also been advertised. With adequate finance and properly trained staff the library will undoubtedly be able to meet the expanding needs of the College.

THE LIBRARY OF THE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

The Language Institute was started in 1958 to train specialist language teachers. It was originally housed in temporary quarters in Johore Bahru. At that time the library had about 300 volumes. In 1959, the Institute was moved to new buildings at Pantai Valley, Kuala Lumpur, and a room was allocated to the library. The reading room seats about 60 people.[15]

The library has grown to a collection of about 12,000 volumes comprising books in English, Malay and Chinese. It is particularly strong in works covering the fields of linguistics, literature, and history. It also possesses a collection of general reference books. The classification scheme used is the Dewey Decimal classification.[16]

A lecturer of the Institute, who is also a qualified librarian, looks after the library in addition to his other duties, and is assisted by a library attendant. Other lecturers help in the issuing of books.[17]

THE LIBRARY OF THE
MALAYAN TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE, PENANG

The Malayan Teachers' College was founded in 1957 to train teachers for the lower forms of secondary schools. It maintains a library of 15,000 volumes covering the fields of art and craft, domestic science, education, geography, history, language and literature, mathematics, music, physical education, political thought, and science. There are books in Malay and Chinese as well as English.[18]

Until recently, the library was housed in a room of the College and had seating for 70 people. It was not classified by any of the generally known schemes, but was divided into several subject sections, each of which constituted a departmental library. There were three catalogues to the collection—author, title, and subject.[19] Today the library occupies an attractive new building and is classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification.

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[15] Language Institute, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in File LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Malayan Teachers' Training College, Penang, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

Until 1962, the library had no full-time librarian, and was administered by a lecturer of the College. The library now has a lecturer/librarian who is assisted by a clerk. Annual expenditure on the library is very small. In 1960, this was only $3,952.[20]

THE LIBRARY OF THE SULTAN IDRIS TRAINING COLLEGE

The Sultan Idris Training College is a training college for Malay school teachers, and was established in 1922. The present library was founded in 1956.

Nothing is known of an earlier library which O.T. Dussek, the first principal of the College, claims to have founded. According to him, this library comprised 1,000 books housed in the main hall of the College. Most of these books belonged to him, and were in several languages. They were not catalogued with the exception of the Malay books.[21]

Dussek also recalls having received on behalf of the College a small collection of Malay books, many of them manuscripts, presented by "someone" in Negri Sembilan. They were catalogued and there was a brass plate inscription on the appropriate book-case.[22] Unfortunately, however, no trace remains of this early library or of the precious Malay manuscripts.

The present library is managed by a Committee of students of the College, and has a general collection of about 7,000 books. The Dewey Decimal Classification is used, and there are "author and subject catalogues." Expenditure on the library in 1960 was $1,000 and in 1962 $3,000. It is planned to air-condition the reading room.[23]

THE LIBRARY OF THE SPECIALIST TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTE

The Specialist Teachers' Training Institute in Cheras Road, Kuala Lumpur, was established in 1960 for the purpose of training qualified teachers in one of the following specialized subjects: science, physical education, art and craft, and library science. The teachers are carefully selected from all the States in Malaya, and after they have been provided with a year's training in the subject of their choice, they return to their designated area to plan short courses to train other teachers.

The Institute has a small library of between 2,000 to 3,000 volumes housed in a room with an area of about 1,400 square feet. The reading room seats about 40 people. Since Nelle McCalla, the lecturer in library science, took charge of the library in 1961, a beginning has been made to classify the library by the Dewey Decimal Classification, and to adopt a card catalogue.[24] The Institute now has a full-time lecturer/librarian.

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[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] O.T. Dussek, *Letter to W.J. Plumbe*, 17th October, 1960.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] Sultan Idris Training College, *Communication to P.P.P.T.M.* (in file LAM/D, University of Malaya Library).

THE LIBRARY OF THE MALAYAN TEACHERS COLLEGE, KUALA LUMPUR

At the time this book was written this College had not yet been established. Founded in 1962, the library occupies an air-conditioned room and has a collection of more than 12,000 volumes. It used to have a Peace Corps Librarian who has since left and also a lecturer who was trained in librarianship in the United States, but who has since been transferred to the Ministry of Education to head the recently formed Textbook Bureau. Thus the College does not now have a trained librarian, and is being looked after by lecturers in the College.

Expenditure on books and periodicals in 1962 totalled nearly $40,000.[25]

(ii) School Libraries

Malaya has a very large school-going population, because more than 50% of her population is under twenty-one years of age. In 1960, there were some five thousand primary schools with a pupil-population of nearly 140,000, and about 386 secondary schools with 157,000 students.[26] This number includes the pupils in the various rural secondary schools, junior trade schools and technical institutes.

School libraries are largely a post-war innovation, and it is indeed heartening that nearly all the schools in Malaya have libraries of their own. But these vary vastly in the quality and quantity of their book stock and service. It has been estimated that only about a dozen schools, including the Victoria Institution, the Anglo-Chinese (Ipoh), the Methodist Boys' School (Kuala Lumpur), the Penang Free School, and the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, have an adequate number of books.[27]

The main deficiencies in the present provision of school libraries are an inadequate number of books, particularly of reference books, because of the lack of funds; lack of proper accommodation largely because the shortage of classrooms has compelled many schools to convert their library rooms into classrooms; and an almost total absence of trained teacher librarians.

The schools obtain their funds from three main sources, namely: (i) the Government; (ii) the profits received from the sale of books; (iii) annual library fees paid by students, which usually do not exceed $2.50 per annum.

Since Malaya's attainment of independence, a number of schools have awakened to the importance of the library in the school, and have allocated more funds for the purchase of books and library equipment. The Methodist

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[24] Nelle McCalla, *Personal Communication*, received 7th June, 1962.

[25] Kent H. Keeth, *Directory of libraries in Malaysia* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Library, 1965), pp. 94–95.

[26] Federation of Malaya, *Official Year Book, 1961*, (Kuala Lumpur: Govt. Press, 1961), p. 210.

[27] C.J. Manuel, "A Survey of Library Facilities in the Federation of Malaya," Paper submitted at the Delhi International Seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Asia, 6th–26th October, 1955, p. 1. (Typewritten).

Mission Board, which operates a number of schools in Malaya with government assistance, is very active in the school library field. For a number of years it had a professional librarian to provide advice and help for starting and reorganizing Methodist school libraries. It is thus no coincidence that the best school libraries in Malaya are probably those attached to Methodist schools.

The Ipoh Anglo-Chinese School, for example, has an air-conditioned library, which was opened in May, 1959. The library seats 120 readers very comfortably and accommodates some 13,000 books, which include some very good representative fiction and non-fiction works and about 550 reference books. It serves about 1,000 pupils and teachers, and is open for 11½ hours each day of the week, with the exception of Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. The library has been placed under the charge of a teacher, who is assisted by a number of student assistants from the upper forms.[28] The Methodist Boys' Secondary School, Kuala Lumpur, has similarly opened a new library recently (September, 1961). It now has about 9,100 books, and is administered by a trained teacher librarian. The reading room will seat 85 readers.[29]

Unfortunately, however, not many schools in Malaya possess such fine libraries. Most school libraries are one-room affairs, badly administered, catalogued and classified, and with a book stock that is generally in very poor condition. Some schools are even worse off and do not have libraries or have been forced to disperse their collections to various classrooms, and convert their library rooms into classrooms.

The main problem facing Malaya's school libraries to-day is not so much the unwillingness of the school authorities to organize libraries as the lack of trained teachers who know how to organize and administer the libraries. Miss L. Caroline Plank, a former Methodist school librarian, has provided an instance of untrained but enthusiastic teachers and pupils who made a mess of a new library which she had helped to organize and set up.[30]

The P.P.P.T.M., the predecessor of the P.P.M., itself frequently received requests for help and advice from many teachers who have been put in charge of school libraries. Until recently, the P.P.P.T.M. paid particular attention to the problems of school libraries. Mention has been made of the reprints of articles concerning school library organization and administration from the October, 1961, issue of the *Malayan Library Journal* which were sent to all the schools in Malaya; and of the one year training course for teacher-librarians established at the Specialist Teachers' Institute at the request of the P.P.P.T.M.[31] The Persatuan has also asked the Minister of Education to create the post of School Libraries Officer, who would advise on and help to organize satisfactory library services in all Malayan schools.

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[28] Mrs. T. Ram and P. Asirvadam, "The Ipoh Anglo-Chinese School Library," *MLJ*, 2(4):156–59, July 1962.

[29] "New School Library at M.B.S.," *MLJ*, 2(1):38, October 1961.

[30] L. Caroline Plank, "Organizing Libraries in Methodist Schools in Malaya," *MLJ*, 2(4):138, July 1962.

[31] See chap. ii.

The reason why the Persatuan gives such a high priority to the improvement of school libraries has been well expressed by one of its past Presidents, Mrs. Hedwig Anuar:

> Children who have access to a good school library and who have learned to make good use of it will leave school and take their place in the community as more educated, alert, intelligent, well-informed, useful and responsible citizens than children who have not become library users while still at school. Children who learn to enjoy and use books in their school library will go on enjoying and using books in public and other libraries when they grow up. Malaya, like many other young and newly developing countries, is also a young country in the sense that its population is young—over half being under twenty-one years of age. This youthfulness can be a very great asset to our new nation, provided that the energies and dreams of our young people can be channelled and realized by giving them opportunities to acquire training, education and knowledge—without these, their youthful energies will be turned to destructive and not constructive ends, their dreams will wither away and die for lack of nourishment. It is, I hope, obvious to us that education is therefore of vital importance to our well-being and progress, and education for our children means not only the provision of buildings and of teachers, but also of books and libraries.[32]

C. *Singapore*

(i) University and College Libraries

Singapore has two universities and one technical college, namely: the University of Singapore, where the medium of instruction is in English, the Nanyang University, where Chinese is mainly used, and the Singapore Polytechnic.

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Introduction. The University of Singapore has its roots in two earlier institutions of higher learning—the King Edward VII College of Medicine (founded in 1905 as the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Government and Medical School), and the Raffles College, which began teaching in 1928 and was formally opened in 1929. Both these institutions were located in Singapore, about four miles apart, and were amalgamated to form the University of Malaya in 1949, as the result of a report on higher education in Malaya made by a Commission headed by Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders. In 1957, when Malaya attained her independence, the University began teaching in Kuala Lumpur as well. In January, 1959, the University split into two largely autonomous divisions of equal status—one in Singapore and the other in Kuala Lumpur. On 1st January, 1962, the former became the University of Singapore, while the latter continued under the old name of the University of Malaya.

The Library of the University of Singapore now serves four Faculties of Arts, Science, Law and Medicine (including Dentistry and Pharmacy). It has grown from a collection of a few hundred books to about 300,000 volumes at the end of 1961, and receives about 3,000 current serials.[33] The library is actually made up of three main collections: (*a*) the Main library, which serves mainly the Faculties of Arts, Science and Law; (*b*) the Chinese library; and (*c*) the Medical Faculty library. In addition, there are some small departmental collections, which consist primarily of laboratory and classroom tools, some standard textbooks and other materials which duplicate some of the more used items in the Main library.[34]

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[32] H. Anuar, "Library Needs in the Federation of Malaya; The Presidential Address, 1962," *MLJ*, 2(3):110–11, April 1962.

The Main Library

History. The main library had its origin in the library of the Raffles College which throughout its history remained scattered in four major collections: the libraries of the Arts, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics Departments. These libraries were under the charge of their respective departments, and were housed at various places at different times. The College never possessed a library of its own. As Professor A. Oppenheim, the former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, has wryly remarked:

> In 1928 Raffles College possessed a large administration block and a small science block sufficient for a school, and two hostels (completed after 1930) but it lacked what some people would consider to be an indispensable part of a College or University, a Library. It appears that when an eminent administrator is the first President of a College[35] he puts in the forefront the needs of the administration. Academic people may think that in the early years of a college, administration is such that it can be conducted from two rooms and that it might be more reasonable to consider a well-equipped library as a central feature of a college; that in the years during which a college is growing in numbers the administration can be housed in the same building. It is however well known that professors are impracticable men. The Library which Raffles College should have had in 1928 did not rise in its grounds at Cluny Road until four years after the University of Malaya came into existence; twenty-five years after the first students entered lecture rooms at Raffles College.[36]

In 1932, the Arts Department Library, which had grown into the largest of the four collections, was moved to the nine foot wide gallery above the Oei Tiong Ham Hall, which was then being used as both an auditorium and a lecture theatre.[37]

Such was the condition of the Raffles College library when the McLean Commission visited Malaya and Singapore "to survey existing arrangements for higher education, general and professional in Malaya; and to consider whether they require extension and, if so, in what directions and by what methods."[38]

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[33] J.M. Waller, *Personal Communication*, 16th April, 1962.

[34] J.M. Waller, *Your Library: a Guide to the Library of the University of Singapore* (2nd ed., rev.; Singapore: University of Singapore, 1962), pp. 3–4.

[35] The first President of the College was Sir Richard Winstedt, a Malayan Civil Servant and eminent Malay scholar.

[36] Loh Fook Seng, "Raffles College" (unpublished B.A. Hons. academic exercise, History Dept., University of Malaya, 1958), p. 44.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

Among the institutions which the Commission visited while in Malaya and Singapore was the Raffles College. Not surprisingly, the lack of a proper library and the dispersal of the books into various departmental collections came under fire. In their report, the Commission expressed the following sentiments regarding the library:

> We do not feel it necessary to enlarge on the importance of an adequate library in an institution devoted to studies of university type. One of the greatest services which Raffles College can perform is to give its students a love of books and the reading of them for their own sake, and this is of the greater importance in a student body of which a large proportion do not hear the English language spoken outside the College itself. The majority of students are to be the Malayan teachers of the future, and unless they be given every encouragement to develop a love of reading, we think that much of the value of their education at Raffles College is lost, if indeed it has begun.
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> It is particularly regrettable, therefore, that no provision has been made for a library building. When we visited Raffles College on the first occasion, the books were housed in cases set at right angles to the walls, with reading tables between them, in a gallery nine feet wide which surrounds the hall in the administrative block; frankly we were pained at the sense of discomfort and the mental inhibition which such a housing of books must entail. On our return some five weeks later, some improvement had been effected for the books devoted to History, Geography and Education had been removed from the gallery down to the hall itself. The cases containing them and the reading tables have been shut off from the main body of the hall by a wooden screen which can be removed when the whole hall is required for other purposes. The remainder of the hall serves as a lecture room. Apart from the main body of the books thus housed in the gallery and ground floor of the main hall, the libraries of Physics, Mathematics and Chemistry are retained in the departments concerned, which means that they are less accessible to the student.[39]

The Commission were of the opinion that the existing arrangements were inadequate and were not conductive towards the provision of an environment "which encourages the desire to read."[40] They therefore recommend that the major requirements of the Raffles College included a building devoted to a library and the abolition of the various departmental libraries and their housing in a common building as one collection.[41]

The recommendations of the Commission could not be implemented because of the outbreak of the Second World War. During the Japanese occupation, the Arts library lost about 10% of its collection from Allied bombing. The library was rehabilitated after the war, and was moved into No. 4 house, which is now the Students' Union. There it remained when the University of Malaya was inaugurated in 1949. In 1950, the Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics libraries were finally incorporated with the Arts library to form the main library.

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[38] Great Britain and Ireland, Colonial Office, *Higher Education in Malaya: a Report of the Commission Appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, June, 1939* (London: H.M.S.O., 1939).

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[41] *Ibid.*

In 1957, when the University began teaching in Kuala Lumpur, one of the library staff, Mr. Beda Lim, was transferred there to supervise the establishment of a library. A number of books and periodicals pertaining to the Arts courses then conducted in Kuala Lumpur were transferred there. When the Kuala Lumpur Division was established in 1959, the Singapore Division continued to guide the development of the library, and until the appointment of a librarian for the Kuala Lumpur Division, all ordering and processing were done by Singapore. The Singapore Division also supervised the transfer of some 17,000 books to the Kuala Lumpur library. These were mainly duplicate books or works relating to those fields of studies—Engineering, Malay and Indian Studies, and Geology—which had ceased to be taught in Singapore and had been transferred to Kuala Lumpur.

The Singapore library ceased to be responsible for the development of the Kuala Lumpur library from the beginning of 1960. But there is still considerable co-operation between the two libraries. The librarians of the two universities are in constant correspondence on bibliographical and administrative questions. There used to be a Joint-Library Committee to facilitate co-operation. It has worked out conditions covering the use of microfilm, inter-library loan code, terms and conditions of service of library assistants, status of library staff and the legal deposit of publications in the two libraries. The Kuala Lumpur library still relies a great deal on the resources of the Singapore library. Each library maintains an author and title card of the other library's resources.

Building. The present Main building was built in 1953, and is air-conditioned.[42] Its construction may be said to mark a new era in the history of the library, which had hitherto been forced to give service in cramped quarters and under difficult conditions. A new wing was added in 1958, following the growth of the library and the increased demands on its services caused by the institution of new departments such as Chinese language and literature, Geology, and Malay Studies, and new faculties such as Engineering and Law. This extension has increased the seating capacity of the library from 250 to about 500.

The present building thus comprises two sections: the older main wing, and the new wing, both of which are linked by a foyer, in which are located the Loans Counter and the main catalogues of the library. The main wing is divided into two floors, the upper of which houses the Chinese library. The ground floor, which is split into two levels by a mezzanine floor, houses the Main Reading Room; the Arts and Law collections; carrels for the use of staff and higher degree students; a Reference Room containing largely ready reference and other bibliographical material; the Reserve Book Room, in which are kept books which are frequently used and are required reading for the various courses and for essays; rooms for the reading and storage of microtext material; a Law Current Periodicals Room; and the Photographic Room.[43]

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[42] University of Malaya, *Annual Report, 1953/54.*

The new wing is divided into three floors: lower ground, ground, and first floors. The lower ground floor houses the office of the Librarian and her secretary; the ground floor, the administrative offices and the Current Periodicals Room; and the first floor, the Science Reading Room and the books and periodicals in pure and applied science.

Further plans have recently been drawn up for extending the two top floors of the existing wings, and it is likely that the present description of the Main library building will soon be dated.[44]

The Main Library Stock The Main library had approximately 22,859 volumes and 300 current journals in 1950, most of which had been inherited from the Raffles College.[45] From this relatively humble beginning, the library has grown in response to the increased teaching programme of the university into one of the finest collections in South-East Asia. To-day, the Main library has some 120,300 volumes and 2,455 current serials.[46]

The collection reflects the teaching and research programmes of the Faculties of Arts, Science and Law. The library has reasonably well-filled general shelves and is able to satisfy the study needs of undergraduate students though not always those of the research worker. But it is gradually building up its research collection. It has the largest and probably the most comprehensive science holdings in Singapore possessing most of the standard science reference works, textbooks and periodicals. It is also a depository library for all the publications printed or published in Singapore and the Federation and for selected publications of UNESCO and FAO.[47]

The library is particularly strong in the field of South-East Asian history and culture. It inherited a useful nucleus of books on Asian subjects from the Raffles College, and has endeavoured to follow a policy of building up a good reference and research collection in oriental studies.

The library's collection comprises not only printed material but also about 11,000 volumes in microform. The microtext material includes holdings of microfilm, microfiche, microprint and microcard.[48]

The microfilm holdings (about 2,000 volumes) are particularly comprehensive in the fields of history, historical geography and statistics, especially with reference to Malaya. The following is a selective list of some of the more important microfilm holdings:[49]

[43] J.M. Waller, *Your Library: a Guide to the Library of the University of Malaya in Singapore* (Singapore: University of Malaya in Singapore, 1960), pp. 4–5.

[44] J.M. Waller, "University Plans Expansion," *SLJ*, 1(2):54, October 1961.

[45] University of Malaya, *Annual Report, 1949/50*.

[46] Waller, *Personal Communication*.

[47] H. Anuar, "Scientific Information Facilities in Singapore," *SLJ*, 1(2):46, October 1961.

[48] J.M. Waller "Our Library in Microform: The Holdings of the Library of the University of Malaya in Singapore," *SLJ*, 1(1):6, April 1961.

[49] *Ibid.*

Wentworth Bayly's *Journal* (1868–77)
Peter Begbie's *The Malayan Peninsula* (1834)
Thomas Braddell's *Statistics of the British Possessions in the Straits of Malacca* (1861)
John Crawfurd's *A Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands* (1856)
East India Co. Records—The Dutch Records A:v.1–31, 1596–1824
The Java Factory Records
The Sumatra Factory Records
The Straits Settlements Factory Records
Colonial Office Correspondence relating to the...Malay Peninsula, 1872–1895
The London Times, 1785–
Ch'uan kuo chu yao pao k'an tzu liao so yin (Chinese periodical index), 1955–58
Chu'an kuo tsung shu mu (Cumulated national bibliography), 1949–57
Ch'uan kuo hsien shu mu (Current national bibliography), 1958–

The library is currently carrying out a major project of microfilming the back numbers of important English and vernacular newspapers published in Malaya and Singapore.

The microfiche holdings are still small. The only major purchase has been the *Linnean Herbarium.*[50]

The microprint collection comprises the whole set of the British Sessional Papers of the House of Commons covering the years 1731–1900 (6,000 volumes altogether).[51]

The microcard holdings (about 4,000 volumes) are especially strong in retrospective sets of scientific serials, including the *American Journal of Physiology*, v.1–25, 1898–1910; *Annalen der Physic,* Folge 1–4, 1790–1928; the *Journal of Parasitology* v.1–13, 1914–27; *Monatshefte fur Chemie und verwandte Teile anderer Wissenschaften*, v.1–74, 1880–1943; *Die Naturwissenschaften*, 1–32 Jahrg., 1913–44; *Zeitschrift fur anorganische und allgemeine Chemie*, bd. 1–252, 1892–1944. There are also microcard holdings of the *Early English Text Society Publications*, the *Publications of the Shakespeare* Society, and the *Chaucer Society Publications.*[52]

Facilities exist for the use of the microtext collection. At present the library has 6 microfilm, 1 microprint, 1 microfiche, and 2 microcard readers.[53]

The Chinese Library

The Chinese Library occupies the same building as the Main library, being located on the first floor of the main wing. It dates from 1953 when the Chinese language and literature Department was established. It is one of the best Chinese collections in South-East Asia, and is particularly rich "in the main classics and commentaries, in bibliography and in archaeology as well as the basic works for the study of language and literature."[54] It also has several editions of manuscripts, scholarly periodicals and works on Buddhism.

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[50] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*
[53] *Ibid.*

There are over 130,000 volumes in the Chinese library, and they are classified according to the Harvard-Yenching system. The card catalogues are in Chinese characters. A printed classified catalogue of the total holdings of the library is in the course of publication. The library is administered by an Assistant Librarian, who is assisted by subordinate staff and is answerable to the University librarian.[55]

The Medical Faculty Library

The Medical Faculty at present has the following departments: Anatomy including Dental Anatomy, Bacteriology, Biochemistry, Botany, Chemistry, Clinical Medicine, Dental Surgery, Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Parasitology, Pathology including Forensic Medicine, Pharmaceutics, Pharmacology, Physics, Physiology, Prosthetic Dentistry, Social Medicine and Public Health, Surgery, Zoology.

The Medical Faculty library possesses the largest collection in the field of the medical sciences in Singapore, and is to all intents and purposes a special library. It is placed under the charge of an Assistant Librarian, but is administered as a branch of the Main library.

The library had as its nucleus the collection built up by the King Edward VII College of Medicine. It is not clear how big this collection was. According to the *Annual Report* of the University for the session 1949/50, the Medical Faculty library comprised about 40,000 volumes. But this number was merely an estimate and must have been incorrect, for in 1954/55 when a stock-taking was made, it was revealed that the library had only 27,300 volumes.[56] As the total accessions between 1949 and 1954 were less than 10,000 volumes, it is fairly reasonable to assume that the Medical Faculty did not inherit more than 20,000 volumes from the older College of Medicine. Average annual accessions since 1954 have been slightly more than 3,000 volumes. At the end of 1961, the library had 45,200 volumes and 805 current serials.[57]

This collection includes comprehensive sets of periodicals relating to the main fields of medicine, strong holdings of medical bibliography and extensive collections of reprints.

Local medical journals are indexed by the library, but it subscribes to the major published periodical indexes and abstracts, including the *Index Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon General's Office*, *Quarterly Cumulative Index Medicus*, *Current List of Medical Literature*, *Index Medicus*, *Index to Dental Literature*, *Excerpta Media*, *Biological Abstracts*, *Chemical Abstracts*, *Abstracts of World Medicine*, and *Abstracts of Soviet Medicine* (parts A&B).[58]

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[54] Waller, *Your Library...* (2nd ed.), p. 3.
[55] *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
[56] University of Malaya, *Annual Report, 1954/55.*
[57] University of Malaya in Singapore, *Annual Report, 1960/61.*
[58] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):48–49, October 1961.

The library is housed separately in one of the buildings of the Faculty of Medicine about four miles away from the main university buildings, and is located in the grounds of the General Hospital. It was completely remodelled and air-conditioned in 1958. At present the books and periodicals in dentistry are housed in the Department of Dental Surgery and staffed by the Medical library.[59]

Cataloguing and Classification

The Main library and the Medical Faculty library are classified by the library of Congress system, while the Chinese library is classified by the Harvard-Yenching system. The main catalogues, housed in the Main library, are on cards and consist of an author-title catalogue and a subject catalogue arranged alphabetically by Library of Congress specific subject headings. The author-title catalogue records author and title entries for all books, periodicals and complete microform material which are in the Main library, the Medical and Dentistry libraries.

The Library Staff

The University did not have a librarian until 1952, when Mr. Ernest Clark was appointed. Prior to that Mrs. T. Kennard filled the position in a temporary capacity. Mr. Clark was replaced by Miss Jean Waller, when he resigned in 1960 to take up the post of librarian of Monash University.

As far as its staffing situation is concerned, the library is more fortunate than any other library in Singapore, and for that matter, in the whole of Malaya. It has fourteen senior staff, the majority of whom are graduates. Of these, eight are qualified professionally and the rest are in the process of obtaining their professional qualifications. One of the senior staff administers the Medical Faculty library, and another the Chinese library. There are approximately thirty-three staff in the non-professional grade, including two photographers and one bookbinder.[60]

As eight of the sixteen of Singapore's professionally qualified librarians work in the university library, it is hardly surprising that the university's library staff have played a very important part in the library development of Singapore and Malaya. The university's staff were responsible for the formation of the first professional library association, the Malayan Library Group. They continue to dominate librarianship in Malaya and Singapore and to play an important part in the Library Association of Singapore.

Use made of the Library

The facilities of the university library are available mainly to the staff and students of the university, but certain categories of persons are also permitted to use the library on obtaining permission from the librarian. These are all the members of the staff of the Teachers' Training College, Singapore, the Singapore Polytechnic, and the Nanyang University; all graduates of the university; the librarians of recognised Singapore libraries, and government research departments in the Federation of Malaya; and "such other persons, organizations, institutions and government departments as may be approved by the University Librarian."[61]

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[59] Waller, *Your Library...* (2nd ed.), p. 3.
[60] Waller, *Personal Communication.*

The hours of opening during the academic terms are:

Monday to Saturday, 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.
Sunday, 9.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

During the vacations, the library is open from 9.00 a.m. till 4.30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 9.00 a.m. till 1.00 p.m. on Saturday

The registered number of members as at 31st December, 1960, was 2,688 made up as follows: Main Library, 1,758; Medical library, 795; Dentistry library, 115. The Chinese library had 135 regular users. 400 of the registered members were outside users. Issue of books averaged 310 per day during term time.[62]

Service to Library users

In addition to participating in the teaching programme of the university, and facilitating research by procuring the necessary books, journals and microtext material, making them accessible by means of organization, and providing personal assistance in connection with them, the library provides a number of services to its users. The most important of these are the following:[63]

1. *Instruction in the use of the library.* The problem of instructing first year students of the university in the use of the library facilities is particularly important in Malaya and Singapore, where the majority of students seldom have the chance to come into contact with a good library service, have no experience in the use of library catalogues, and are bewildered by the complexity of the library's arrangement. In order to assist students to make more effective use of the library's resources, the librarian gives lectures to all new students at the beginning of each university session during Orientation week, outlining the facilities available and the system of the library. These lectures are supplemented by conducted tours of the library. Since Miss Waller assumed office as librarian, the library has published two editions of a guide to the library entitled "Your Library," which describes succinctly the workings of the library and the various services provided by it. The library guide is supplemented by a number of "library leaflets," which augment the information in the guide and ensure that all information is kept up to date. Thus a leaflet may describe in more detail loan procedures; or the workings of the Reserve Book Room, probably the most used section of the library by

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[61] University of Malaya in Singapore, *Loans* ("Library Leaflets, no. 1," revised, May 22, 1961), p. 2. (Mimeographed).

[62] University of Malaya in Singapore, *Annual Report, 1960/61*.

[63] Information on additional services provided by university library based on Waller's *Your Library* (2nd ed.), pp. 17–18.

under-graduate students; or may aim to assist readers to make the best use of the resources of the library in a particular subject field, such as law, by providing a more detailed explanation of the classification of that field and a list of the major reference works, bibliographies and textbooks in that field which are held by the library.

2. *Publications.* As well as the library guide and occasional leaflets, the library produces a Monthly Booklist, incorporating Library Notes covering recent interesting acquisitions. It lists new books which have been added to the library in classified order following the Library of Congress classification scheme.

3. *Exhibitions.* The library has a permanent exhibition area in the foyer of the Main Library, where book exhibitions are held from time to time to publicize new acquisitions or special events.

4. *Photocopying service.* The library has a Photographic Department which is capable of producing microfilms (positive and negative), photoprints and other photographic enlargements, lantern slides, etc. This service is at present only available for academic staff and higher degree students.

5. *Inter-Library loans.* Academic staff and higher degree students may arrange through the librarian to borrow books from other libraries in Singapore and Malaya with which inter-loan agreements have been made.

Conclusion

The library of the University of Singapore compares favourably with other university libraries in Asia. It has a particularly rich collection of source material in South-East Asian history, for the intention is that the University should become a centre for South-East Asian studies. That this dream is rapidly being realized is due in no small measure to the acquisitions policy of the university library.

THE LIBRARY OF THE NANYANG UNIVERSITY

The Nanyang (South-East Asia) University, which uses Chinese as a medium of instruction, was built largely through the initiative and financial support of the Chinese community in Malaya and Singapore. Teaching was begun in 1956, but the university was formally inaugurated in 1958.[64] In 1961, the university had about 130 teachers and 1,861 students.[65]

The university has three Colleges or Faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce. Teaching in the College of Arts is confined to Chinese language and literature, History and Geography, Modern language and literature, Economics, and Political Science. The College of Science has four departments: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology; while the College of Commerce has three: Business administration, Accountancy, and Banking.[66]

To serve the teaching and research programmes of the university, there has been built up over the last six years a fairly comprehensive collection of books, periodicals and microtext material. The library has approximately 120,000 volumes (including 35,000 volumes in English).[67] It receives 610 current serials by subscription, exchange and donation.[68] It also has a small collection of microfilms comprising chiefly the publications of the Peking, Chin Wah, Chin Lin, and Nanking Universities. There are five microfilm readers in the university for the use of staff and students.[69]

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[64] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959* (Singapore: Govt. Printing Office, 1961), p. 215.
[65] *World of Learning, 1960/61* (London: Europa, 1961), p. 838.
[66] *Ibid.*

The library shares an attractive oriental-styled building with the university's administration. This building consists of a four-storey pagoda-shaped tower, flanked on either side by a three-storey wing. The library occupies the first and second floors of the building. There are altogether four reading rooms with a total seating capacity of 524 readers, a Reference Book Room, a Current Periodicals Room, a small Newspaper Room, a Research Room, a Microfilm Room which houses the microfilm collection and readers, and a store for books.[70]

The library's English collection is still small, but it subscribes to a number of indexes and abstracts, including *Biological Abstracts, Chemical Abstracts, Physics Abstracts, Industrial Arts Index* (now *Applied Science and Technology Index*, and *Business Periodicals Index*), *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Subject Index to Periodicals*, and *Library Literature*.[71] The students and staff of the Nanyang University can draw on the library resources of the University of Singapore.

The Chinese and English collections are shelved separately, and classified by different schemes. The English books are classified according to the Dewey Decimal System.[72] The catalogue to the English collection is an author, title and subject card catalogue arranged alphabetically in one array. The subject headings are not specific, but are broad class headings.[73]

The Chinese collection is classified according to the system invented by Mr. Liu Kok Chun and published by the Nanking Chin Lin University. The system appears to be an adaptation of the Dewey Classification. The main Chinese catalogue is a classified one, and there are separate author, title and subject indexes on cards.[74]

The library has a staff of twenty, comprising the librarian, three assistant librarians, nine library assistants, and seven attendants.[75] As far as can be gathered, none of the staff are professionally qualified, although one of the staff members is at present in England studying for the Registration examination of the (British) Library Association. All the senior staff are graduates of Chinese universities, and some of them have had considerable library experience.

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[67] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):47, October 1961.

[68] Nanyang University, *Library Handbook, 1961*, p. 8. (in Chinese).

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[70] Nanyang University, *Library Handbook, 1962*, pp. 13–16.

[71] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):48–49, October 1961.

[72] Nanyang University, *Library Handbook, 1962*, p. 8.

[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

[75] *Ibid.*, p.1.

The library publishes a handbook which provides an introduction to the workings of the library, and provides a photocopying service for students and staff. All important local Chinese periodicals are indexed by the staff of the library.

THE LIBRARY OF THE SINGAPORE POLYTECHNIC

Introduction. The Singapore Polytechnic was founded in 1958 with Departments of Engineering, Architecture and Building, Science and Technology, Commerce, General Education, and Nautical Science. With a change of Government on 31st May, 1959, some of the courses in the Polytechnic were abolished, modified, or replaced to bring them into line with the Government's industrialization programme. Thus the Departments of Science and Technology, and of General Education were discontinued, while the Departments of Commerce was replaced by that of Accountancy. The other departments were strengthened. The policy of the new Board of Governors is to concentrate on more technical courses with an eye to the future needs of Singapore when the industrial development plans of the present Government come to fruition.[76]

At present (1962) the Polytechnic conducts full- and part-time courses on a professional, technician's and craftsman's level. There are now some 2,600 full- and part-time students and about 80 full-time lecturers and a large number of part-time lecturers.[77]

The library of the Singapore Polytechnic was established at the same time as the parent institution, and was opened on 3rd November, 1958, with a stock of 4,000 books and 200 current serials. Its first librarian was Miss E.J. Carnell, the author of *Library Administration*, who started the library on sound organizational lines.[78] She resigned in June, 1959, and was replaced by Mrs. N.O. Wild, who acted in a temporary capacity as librarian until February, 1960. After Mrs. Wild's resignation, the library was without a professional librarian until July, 1961, when the present librarian, Mrs. Rosemary Yeap, A.L.A., was appointed.[79]

Book stock. The library has 13,250 volumes mainly books of reference in the various courses taught in the Polytechnic. In addition, it receives through purchase, donation and exchange about 300 professional and technical journals. The major indexes and abstracts are subscribed to by the library, and include the *Subject Index to Periodicals*, the *Engineering Index*, the *Bulletin and Foundry Abstracts of the British Cast Iron Research Association, Chemical Abstracts, Electrical Engineering Abstracts*, and *Physics Abstracts*. The library maintains a complete set of the Specifications of the American Society for the Testing of Materials, and a complete set of British Standards Specifications.[80]

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[76] Singapore Polytechnic (Singapore: Govt. Printing Office, 1961).

[77] R. Yeap, Librarian, Singapore Polytechnic, *Personal Communication*, 28th May, 1962.

[78] E.J. Carnell, "The Singapore Polytechnic Library," *MLGN*, 3(2):20, November 1958.

[79] Yeap, *Personal Communication*.

[80] *Ibid.*

About 2,000 volumes are added to the library every year. Expenditure on books, serials and binding in 1961 was $28,500, $7,800, and $360, respectively.[81]

Building. The library is housed in a specially designed air-conditioned room on the first floor of the administrative block of the Polytechnic. It has a seating capacity of 200, and it is estimated that its steel shelves will hold another 7,000 volumes.[82]

Cataloguing and Classification. The library's present catalogues and classification system were introduced by Miss Carnell. The classification scheme used is U.D.C. There is an author and title catalogue for books and serials in sheaf form, and a classified catalogue on cards. The sheaf catalogue is in the process of being replaced by a card catalogue.

Staff. The library is administered by a professional librarian, who is assisted by eight non-professional staff. Of the four non-qualified staff who are endeavouring to obtain professional qualifications, two are graduates.[83] Expenditure on staff in 1961 totalled $32,920.[84]

Use made of the library. All staff and students of the Polytechnic have free access to the library, but at present borrowing facilities are extended only to the academic staff and to students in the second and later years.[85] This is to some extent an improvement for the lending facilities were only available to staff members when the library first opened its doors in 1958.[86] Eventually, it is hoped that lending privileges will be extended to all students. Book issues in 1961 totalled 23,652.[87] The reference facilities of the library are also made available to persons representing industrial or technical organizations on obtaining permission from the librarian.[88]

(ii) School Libraries

The education system in Singapore is very similar to that of Malaya. As in Malaya, the schools of Singapore are divided into four main types according to the language of instruction: English, Chinese, Malay, and Tamil. Most of these schools are either fully supported by the Government or partially-aided. In 1959, there were 266,625 pupils attending primary schools, and 48,723 attending secondary schools. About 211,955 of these received free education.[89]

What has been said regarding the condition of school libraries in Malaya applies to Singapore. In most of the schools there are school libraries: rooms set aside for the purpose in large schools, and classroom libraries in the others—even in the primary schools. But most of the libraries have inadequate book stocks, particularly reference books, and are poorly organized because of the lack of trained teacher-librarians. As in Malaya, there is no organized system for providing libraries in the schools, and no co-ordination provided by the Ministry of Education. In those schools providing libraries, a per capita levy is usually made on all the children for the purchase of the books. Some of the schools with very good libraries include the Singapore Chinese High School (44,000 volumes), the Anglo-Chinese School (Singapore), the Raffles Institution (which also has a gramophone record collection), and the Victoria Institution.

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[81] *Ibid.*
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] Anuar, *SLJ*, 1(2):51, October 1961.
[84] Yeap, *Personal Communication.*
[85] *Singapore Polytechnic*, p. 8.
[86] Carnell, *MLGN*, 3(2):20, November 1958.
[87] Yeap, *Personal Communication.*
[88] *Singapore Polytechnic*, p. 8.
[89] Singapore, *Annual Report, 1959*, p. 208.

The problem of the lack of trained teacher-librarians is a cause of great concern to the Library Association of Singapore, which holds regular vacation courses for teacher-librarians. The Association recently carried out a survey of secondary school libraries in Singapore. The results of the survey will be published soon. It is hoped that the recommendations made by the Association will be noted by the Ministry of Education, for there is obviously an urgent need to improve the condition of school libraries.

CHAPTER VII

PROBLEMS OF LIBRARY PROVISION IN WEST MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE

Malaya and Singapore to-day stand on the threshold of a new era in library development. Both territories are emerging from what may be called the Dark Ages of librarianship. Singapore is ahead in library development, and has already seen the dawn; but Malaya is not far behind. Both these territories, however, face many problems in the planning and provision of libraries, and it may be some time before all the problems are solved.

One major problem confronting both territories is the lack of trained librarians. Existing libraries are all grievously understaffed, and unless steps are immediately taken to increase the number of trained library staff, any future expansion of library services will either be ineffective or impossible. The experience of Malayan and Singapore libraries has proved time and time again that enthusiasm alone is not sufficient to run libraries along effecitve lines, and that any expenditure on libraries administered by untrained staff is largely money down the drain.

There are three main reasons why there is such a great shortage of trained librarians. Firstly, it is only in recent years that librarianship has been recognized in Malaya and Singapore as a skilled profession requiring as much training, education and experience as other more well-established professions. It may yet take several years before the unfavourable public image of the librarian created by several generations of untrained and unskilled library clerks is completely erased.

Secondly, librarianship is still a relatively poorly paid profession, except perhaps in the university libraries, and consequently does not attract many recruits. This problem of poor pay is of course related to the public image of the librarian.

The third reason why there are inadequate librarians in Malaya and Singapore is that there are at present no local facilities to provide the necessary training. There are two ways in which a local person can secure library qualifications: (*a*) by sitting for the (British) Library Association examinations as an external student; or (*b*) by obtaining qualification in overseas schools of librarianship.

Method (*a*) can be achieved by private study, or by attending the occasional librarianship classes conducted by the library association of both territories. This method is a difficult way of securing adequate qualifications because it requires considerable perseverence, and because there is a shortage of books and journals on librarianship in Malaya. Attempts have been made to acquire more books on librarianship in recent years. The University of Malaya, for instance, has built up a very good collection of books and journals on librarianship, which it makes available to all aspiring librarians. Despite the obstacles involved, method (*a*) is rapidly becoming very popular.

Most of the existing local librarians have secured their qualifications in foreign library schools, but this method has not produced many librarians because relatively few people can afford to study librarianship overseas without the aid of a scholarship. In the past most of the scholarships available for overseas study and research from foreign governments and philanthropic organizations were given to students who were engaged in fields of studies other than librarianship. Although a limited amount of scholarships are now given to would-be librarians, the number trained under this method is still very inadequate.

Malaya and Singapore are not only plagued by a shortage of qualified librarians, but also of librarians trained to solve the problems created by local conditions. Almost all the local librarians have been trained in either Britain, the United States, Australia, or New Zealand. The courses in these overseas schools of librarianship are naturally enough geared to their own local problems which are frequently quite different from those encountered by librarians in Malaya, Singapore, and other newly developing nations. For example, there are differences in the problems of preserving library materials, in the planning of library buildings, and in many library techniques. Social, political, cultural, and administrative differences also affect the organization and administration of libraries of all kinds. The librarian in Malaya and Singapore is faced with the tasks of providing libraries for a multi-lingual population, and books in different languages and scripts, and of serving a predominantly youthful population largely inexperienced in the use of libraries. Thus the librarian trained overseas often finds that he cannot make use of many of his newly acquired and sophisticated skills. Of course not all the training that he receives is useless. After all there are certain basic skills in librarianship which must be acquired whether the person comes from Malaya or Timbuctoo.

However, in order to produce librarians conversant with local needs and problems and to increase the number of trained librarians more rapidly, Malaya and Singapore will have to cease to rely on foreign schools of librarianship. It is essential to have local library schools, which, in addition to conducting the basic courses on library skills and techniques, will also include instruction covering such topics as tropical library buildings, book preservation, special problems of cataloguing books in Jawi, Chinese, Tamil, Arabic and other Eastern languages, the history of Asian libraries, and library laws and ordinances of South-East Asian countries—topics not usually found in the syllabus of western schools of librarianship.

Several major problems arise from the need to provide books in Malay, Chinese, and Tamil for the literate population. As has been shown in previous chapters, the majority of the people in Malaya and Singapore are not literate in English. Only about 10% of the population in Malaya are literate in English, and about 21% in Singapore. The need, therefore, is not only for books in English but also for books in the various vernacular languages, and particularly in Malay, the national language.

PROBLEMS OF LIBRARY PROVISION

The problems that arise from this need to provide books in the vernacular may be classified under four broad heads as follows:

(a) *Problems of selection and acquisition.* The volume of publishing in Malaya and Singapore is still very small. Well under 1,000 non-government publications, excluding newspapers, are published every year in Singapore and the Federation. Slightly less than half are under fifty pages, and the majority are in Malay, followed in order by English, Chinese and Tamil. There is a high proportion of schoolbooks on all subjects among the publications, but the majority are of a trashy nature and unsuitable for stocking in libraries. As a result most of the books in the vernacular have to be imported from either Indonesia, Hong Kong or India.

Most current Indonesian publications are listed in the Indonesian national bibliography, *Berita bulanan*, and their acquisition is a relatively simple problem. The only snag is that there are some major differences in the spelling, and grammar of the Malay and Indonesian languages, which to some extend detract from the usefulness of Indonesian publications. However, steps are being taken by the Malaysian and Indonesian governments to unify the two languages and eliminate the differences that exist.

As Malay is the national language, both the Malayan and Singapore Governments are actively promoting its use and stimulating the publication of worthwhile Malay books. Both the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka in Malaya and the Dewan Bahasa dan Kebudayaan Kebangsaan in Singapore are endeavouring to achieve these ends.

The need to import Chinese books also gives rise to a number of problems in acquisition and selection which are peculiarly their own. Because there is a blanket ban on certain Chinese publishers, great care has to be taken to ensure that banned publications are not inadvertently purchased. It is particularly difficult to obtain children's books, and books on politics, history, economics and other social sciences, which are not used as vehicles of Communist ideology. Even the Chinese classics of literature and philosophy have been re-edited with a Communist slant, so that every edition has to be examined. Obviously there is a great need for more Chinese books with a Malayan background.

Most current Tamil books are listed in the *Indian National Bibliography*, and have to be ordered direct from firms in South India. The output of Tamil books is still small, and the classics and romances still form the majority of Tamil publications.

(b) *Problems of staffing.* The provision of Malay, Chinese and Tamil books implies that there must be staff who combine a sufficiently advanced knowledge of these languages with a sound knowledge of the basic tenets and techniques of librarianship. Unfortunately, however, it has not always been easy to find skilled librarians who are also skilled linguists. Most local librarians are conversant with at least one vernacular language in addition to English, but few have the linguistic ability to deal with the more advanced textbooks and works of non-fiction.

(c) *Problems of binding and replacement.* Most of the vernacular books are less costly than those printed in English. But, then, they are also of poorer quality, for they are usually bound in flimsy, paper covers, and the quality of the print, paper and illustrations is usually very low. Thus the cheapness of vernacular books is offset by the need to bind them, which adds to their cost and the rapidity with which they wear creates problems in obtaining replacements of books which are often printed in small editions only.

(d) *Problems of cataloguing and classification.* There are many technical problems involved in the cataloguing and classification of Malay, Chinese and Tamil books for one library. This is partly because the three languages use different scripts. It may therefore be necessary to provide for three author catalogues, one in each language. It is of course possible to transliterate all the authors' names into the roman alphabet, and to file them in one alphabetical sequence. But transliteration is no simple task.

To make matters worse, Malay, Indonesian, Chinese and Tamil names are often complicated by such things as the lack of surname (in Malay), the use of honorific and familiar names (in Chinese), and the use of titles of dignity (in Indonesian and Malay) such as *Raden* and *Tengku* which become part of the name.

Not all the problems of library provision in Malaya and Singapore are connected with the need to provide for books in the vernacular languages. One striking feature of library provision in Malaya and Singapore is that children outnumber adults as members of the various public libraries. In Malaya, children usually constitute 60% of the library members; in Singapore, the proportion is even higher as is evident from the membership of the National Library, Singapore, where in 1960 there were 25,000 children members (excluding a further 4,560 served by the mobile library) as against 9,000 adult members. This high proportion of children membership would be most unusual in most western countries, and is a reflection of the population pattern in Malaya and Singapore, where about 50% of the population is under 15 years of age.

The astounding rate of increase in the number of child members (i.e. those under 15 years of age) in the libraries of Malaya and Singapore since the war has brought with it the attendant problems of books selection and provision, of a shorter "life" for books in the junior library, and the pressing need for rebinding and replacement of books at an ever increasing rate. It has also become necessary to provide an adequate supervision and guidance of children's reading. Unfortunately, however, in the whole of Malaya and Singapore, there is only one librarian who has been trained specially to deal with children. The need for more children's librarians will make itself increasingly felt with the passage of years, which if not met will result in ineffective library service for children, the adult readers of the future. Sheer numbers alone make the problem of library work with children a formidable one indeed.

Yet another problem that confronts Singapore and Malaya is the lack of national bibliographies both current and retrospective, and of union catalogues and lists of serials. The need for union catalogues and lists of serials is particularly great in local libraries, which are generally inadequately stocked and have to rely on the resources of one another. They will also help to eliminate extensive duplication of stock, which is undesirable because most of the libraries have very limited financial resources.

These are but some of the more important problems that both Malaya and Singapore are facing and will continue to face for some time to come. The problems are not insurmountable. Both Malaya and Singapore have young and energetic populations, enlightened governments, and an ever-increasing corps of eager and enthusiastic librarians and library workers.

CHAPTER VIII

EPILOGUE

Recent developments in West Malaysia

Library development in West Malaysia has on the whole been much slower than in Singapore. A number of reasons have been forwarded to explain this slower rate of development. The major one is that the relevant authorities have until recently failed to appreciate the importance of libraries in stimulating economic and educational progress. This failure is all the more surprising in view of the large commitment to educational and rural development, on the part of the Federal and State Governments. Libraries, and especially special and public libraries, by providing the sources of information and the means for self-education are as necessary to the educational and industrial infrastructure as buildings, roads and other public utilities.

Another reason that is frequently advanced for the lack of library development in West Malaysia is the lack of funds. This excuse does not hold much water when one considers the fact that many countries less developed than Malaysia have fairly advanced library systems, and when one takes into account the many millions spent on projects which are not as economically justified as libraries are.

A more valid reason can be found in Malaysia's federal structure. Despite a relatively strong central government, delays are inevitably created in the implementation of projects which require the cooperation of State Governments. Moreover, since the Constitution makes the Federal Government responsible for the establishment of libraries, State Governments have no legal authority to set up libraries *per se* without the approval of the Federal Government. In any case, State Governments are usually financially too weak to provide the capital necessary for setting up libraries.

In the last few years, there have been some encouraging signs of a more enlightened official attitude towards the development of libraries. The establishment of a very sound library at the Mara Institute of Technology, the strengthening of the Library at the Serdang Agricultural College, the founding of new libraries at Bernama (the official news agency of Malaysia), Fida (Federal Industrial Development Authority), the Standards Institution of Malaysia, and the creation of professional posts in existing Government libraries, such as those in the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Parliament, and the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, are all symptomatic of a more enlightened attitude.

But perhaps the most encouraging development to date has been the setting up in February, 1966, of a National Library Committee to make recommendations to the Federal Cabinet on the nature and functions of a National Library for Malaysia. The Committee comprises a representative each from the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, the University of Malaya, the Malaysian Establishment Office, and the ministries of Commerce and Industry, Education, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Works Posts and Telecommunications, and Information and Broadcasting, with the Permanent Secretary to the Prime Minister's Department as Chairman, and the Director of the National Archives as Secretary.

Although the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia[1] is not represented on this Committee, it has co-operated with the National Library Committee in a number of ways, and is represented on some of the technical subcommittees which have been set up to advise this Committee on such matters as staffing, the national bibliography, and the union catalogue for government and special libraries.

On the advice of the National Library Committee, the Federal Government has approved the establishment of a nucleus of the National Library in the National Archives to implement the recommendations which the Committee may make from time to time. This division is at present headed by an Assistant Director (Libraries) who is currently responsible for operating the Preservation of Books Act, 1966[2], preparing the Malaysian national bibliography, and organizing a union catalogue of the holdings of government and quasi-government libraries.

The National Library Committee has also obtained the consent of UNESCO to provide a library consultant who will work in co-operation with the National Archives to advise the Government on the functions and future set-up of the National Library. A National Library building is planned for 1971.

Another exciting development has been the decision of the Selangor Government to take over the financially impoverished Kuala Lumpur Book Club and use it to form the nucleus of a public library. A draft bill has been prepared to set up a statutory corporation to be known as the Perpustakaan 'Am Negeri Selangor (Selangor Public Library). Unfortunately, however, this draft bill was drawn up without professional advice and contains provisions for the charging of subscriptions to certain classes of members, obviously a relic of nineteenth century practices.

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[1] After the formation of Malaysia in September, 1963, steps were taken to merge the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia and the Library Association. This was achieved in July 1964 with the official registration of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia. The Library Association of Singapore reconstituted itself into a branch of the P.P.M. The Singapore branch, however, became a separate association again in 1966 after the separation of Singapore from Malaysia. However, very close cooperation still exists between the two Associations. A Joint Liaison Council of the two associations meet regularly twice a year to discuss common problems. In addition, the two associations publish a common journal, the *Perpustakaan*, and have two important joint standing committees: the Joint Standing Committee on Library Co-operation and Bibliographical Services and the Joint Standing Committee on Library Education.

[2] The Preservation of Books Act, 1966, which repeals the provisions of the Preservation of Books Ordinance, 1950, provides for the deposit of two copies of every book published in Malaysia in the National Archives. Publishers are also required to supply on demand one copy of every book to certain institutions which have been given desposit privileges. At present, the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, the Sabah Central Library and the Sarawak Museum have been granted deposit privileges. The 1966 Act is a more satisfactory one than the 1950 ordinance because it places the onus of legal deposit on the publisher rather than the printer, and does not exempt the Government Printer from its provisions. Under this act also, the National Archives is allowed to retain the books deposited in it rather than re-distribute them after recording to the University of Malaya, the University of Singapore, and the British Museum as was required under the 1950 ordinance.

Yet another promising development has been the steps taken by the Executive Committee of the Gurney Memorial Library in Negri Sembilan to urge the State Government to take over the library and convert it into a public library.

Another project which is likely to have a great impact on the future of public library development in Malaysia is the drawing up of a proposed blueprint for public libraries in Malaysia. On the initiative of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia, and with the financial help of the Asia Foundation, Mrs. Hedwig Anuar, Director of the National Library of Singapore, was requested in February 1968 to draw up a blueprint for the development of public libraries in Malaysia, especially West Malaysia. Her terms of reference are: "1) To undertake a survey of Malaysia in relation to public library needs; 2) To draft legislation to set up an appropriate library authority or authorities responsible for the development of public library services; 3) To prepare a Blueprint for the establishment and development of public libraries, together with draft estimates for the first five years, to the Federal Government of Malaysia; (and) (4) To make any other recommendations relevant to the development of public libraries in Malaysia."

As Mrs. Anuar's work has the official blessing of the Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO and the National Library Committee, it is unlikely that her findings and recommendations will die at the doorstep of official indifference.

APPENDIX

A PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA

A Memorandum prepared by the Malayan Library Group

A. *Present Library Facilities*

Libraries in Towns

1. An examination of the library services at present available in the Federation of Malaya shows that there are only four towns, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca and Penang, which have libraries of 10,000 or more volumes and in these four towns, where the population (1947 census) totals 500,430 there are about 136,000 books. Of this total, it is estimated that about 100,000 volumes are possessed by the Kuala Lumpur Book Club. In each of these towns except Malacca, however, there are free libraries provided by the British Council and/or the United States Information Service, the stock of books in these libraries making a combined total of 33,584. There are, in addition, about eleven towns which have libraries provided by societies, book clubs, or religious organizations, and the stock of these varies from a few hundred upwards. Five of the larger of these towns have a total population of 158,732, but the total number of books in their libraries is no more than 6,202. Moreover, there are three towns with substantial population totalling 94,015 which appear to have no library whatever. Most of the libraries referred to are subscription libraries, and in some cases the income received from subscriptions is augmented from municipal, Federal or State and Settlement funds. These grants are however, generally speaking, extremely meagre and are so inadequate as to make little difference to the library services provided. There are a few libraries where no membership fee is charged.

2. No library in Malaya is adequately meeting the needs of the population in the town in which the library is situated, even the one or two cases where a proportion of the funds comes from public sources. The income received from subscriptions plus the grants from public sources are generally so small that only a small proportion of the number of books which ought to be made available can be purchased, with the result that those which are obtained are limited to those of a popular and recreative nature. Little provision is made for the student. An examination of the shelves of these libraries reveals that too little money has been spent on purchasing books and re-binding books in the past: although the number of books in stock may be considerable, many of them should really be withdrawn. The physical condition of the books is, generally speaking, very poor—a further indication of inadequate book funds.

3. Most of the books existing in libraries are in English, but there has been a tendency recently to add small numbers of books in the vernacular languages.

Libraries in Rural Areas

4. Several libraries, particularly those of the British Council and the United States Information Service, are providing boxes of books for communities outside the town areas or are using a mobile library. The Kuala Lumpur Book Club, for instance sends books by post to over 500 members residing beyond fifteen miles from Kuala Lumpur. Within the last year or so the Malayan Public Library Association has provided collections of books in Chinese and is now providing books in Malay. Most of these collections are in new villages although some of this organization's collections have been deposited in towns. At present the number of libraries organized by this

Association totals 82, and this is the nearest approach to an organized system of libraries which exists in the Federation. This Association functions from a headquarters in Kuala Lumpur where there is a stock of 40,000 volumes from which loans are made to other libraries. There is considerable difficulty in providing all the books required by members of these libraries and a varied choice of books is achieved by exchange between the libraries.

Libraries in Schools

5. Most schools have class room libraries, and some of the larger schools have rooms set aside for the purpose of a school library. In many cases, however, the stock of books is inadequate to serve the needs of senior students who should have access to a good school library of several hundred volumes.

B. *The Need for Libraries*

Public Libraries in General

6. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, in its Public Library Manifesto, proclaims "UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for popular education and for the growth of international understanding, and thereby for the promotion of peace." It states that "As a democratic institution operated by the people for the people, the public library should be:

> established and maintained under clear authority of law; supported wholly or mainly from public funds; open for free use on equal terms to all members of the community, regardless of occupation, creed, class or race.

The complete public library should provide: books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, maps, pictures, films, music scores and recordings and give guidance in their use. It should offer children, young people, men and women, opportunity and encouragement to educate themselves continuously; to keep abreast of progress in all fields of knowledge; to maintain freedom of expression and a constructively critical attitude towards all public issues; to be better social and political citizens in their country and of the world; to be more efficient in their day-to-day activities; to develop their creative capacities and powers of appreciation in arts and letters; to aid generally in the advancement of knowledge; to use their leisure time to promote personal happiness and social well being. The Public Library should be active and positive in its policy and a dynamic part of community life. It should not tell people what to think, but it should help them decide what to think about."

7. At the Seminar organized by UNESCO and held at Delhi in October, 1955, the participants enumerated some basic proposals for a public library service as follows:—

"The Public Library service is a library service authorized by legislation available to the public without charge, and financed out of public funds. It has special importance in a modern state for

(*a*) the diffusion of ideas,
(*b*) the creative use of leisure,
(*c*) the preservation of national culture.

It is not primarily an institution for scholars and students, nor an instrument for formal education. It should be an independent service for use according to the individual needs of the citizen. The Public Library can give special assistance in the advancement of technical knowledge and skill, by the distribution of literature."

8. As the cultural and educational aspects of a country's life develop, as social progress is made, and there is an awakening of the realization of

nationhood, the need for public libraries becomes much more apparent and increases enormously. Within recent years, various countries, some of them having recently obtained independence, have developed their public library services considerably: Indonesia, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast might be instanced in this connection. In each of these countries rapid strides have been made in the development of government-supported public library services on a nation-wide basis.

Library need in Malaya

9. During the past decade a general need for increased and improved library services has become very apparent in Malaya. The increase in the use of existing subscription libraries in Malayan towns, several of which are in receipt of subsidies from Federal Government, State, Settlement or municipal funds, the experience of the Adult Education Association in forming libraries, the "book box" scheme which the Sir Henry Gurney Library at Malacca and the British Council at Kuala Lumpur extend to rural areas, the mobile library and the "book trunk" schemes of U.S.I.S., the work of the Kuala Lumpur Book Club in sending books to subscribers throughout the Federation, especially the system of small public libraries provided in the towns, new villages and rural areas which have recently been established by the Malayan Public Library Association, all provide evidence of the need for libraries not only in towns but also in the kampongs and the new villages where 75% of the population live.

10. It is known that certain groups of people are conscious of the need for more libraries. These include school-children; school-teachers; students; persons studying independently of the formal education system; persons newly literate; members of local government councils; businessmen; farmers; shopkeepers; soldiers; railway workers; dock workers; laboratory, office and factory workers; adult education tutors; professional men and women. Experience in the Libraries organized by the Malayan Public Libraries Association and by other bodies show the importance of providing library service for adolescents, for new literates and especially for children.

C. *The Framework of a Public Library Service For Malaya*

General Considerations

11. The UNESCO publication Fundamental Education had made it clear at an international level that "A satisfactory system of library service cannot be achieved by the piece-meal efforts of local Governments alone." It states that "Sound planning on a broad co-operation basis must replace drift and chance and a narrow localism in library development; the heart of the matter is the establishment of a sound framework of larger units of library service."

12. In preparing this memorandum, the Malayan Library Group has taken into account the population of the towns and rural areas in Malaya, literacy, communications, financial conditions, local and state government factors and the shortage of trained and experienced librarians, and we consider that a satisfactory library service for the whole of Malaya can only be provided by the Federation Government by means of a single administrative unit. Three of the most important factors in this connection are:—

(*a*) Lines of communication cut across State and Settlement boundaries, thus making the organization of library services on a State basis both difficult and costly. Transport is a most important factor in the organization of a network of libraries.

(*b*) State and Settlements vary greatly in density of population, and those where the distribution of books will be most difficult have no large towns in which a substantial supply of books could be maintained economically.

(*c*) Some States and Settlements would find the maintenance of an adequate library service very costly in relation to other services. Equivalent library services would be less costly, if provided by the Federation Government as part of a nation-wide scheme.

A Nation-wide Service is Needed

13. It is desirable that local councils for local groups of persons should awaken local interest in library service and have some responsibility for providing them, and we consider that this can be best done by the local authorities being responsible for providing buildings or other accommodation for the libraries, which would be provided with book stocks and library staff by the Federation Government.

14. In order to provide nation-wide library service we consider it necessary to have a headquarters, possibly in Kuala Lumpur, and at least five regional libraries. The latter should be placed in the larger towns and should be chosen very carefully with regard to communications so that they could serve libraries in smaller places within a specified geographical area. Apart from these five towns, library provision in other districts would be made by means of static libraries in small towns and villages and by mobile libraries which would tour those other villages and kampongs where populations are very small. Where it is not possible to provide a full-time or part-time library service, staffed with paid librarians, books could be sent in boxes to volunteer librarians who would be responsible for the safe keeping of books and for issuing them to the public. Transport in these cases would be by motor launches, local buses, or private cars to small and outlying rural communities.

15. Within recent years the importance of library and information services to agriculturalists and to industrial and commercial organizations has been increasingly realized and much information has been made available by means of co-operative inter-library lending through organizations specially created for this purpose, such as the National Central Library in England and the various union catalogues and co-operative library centres in the United States. One of the services which a national library system should provide would be the compilation of a union catalogue of all the holdings of books and periodicals in all the libraries of Malaya and the creation of some central bureau through which national and international inter-library loans could be facilitated.

16. Another service which should be provided by the national library system is the compilation of a national bibliography, that is, a reliable record of all books, pamphlets, periodicals, etc., published in Malaya, and perhaps also of all books, articles, etc., about Malaya no matter where published. The work of existing libraries in meeting the needs of students concerned with all aspects of Malaya is greatly hampered at present by the lack of such a comprehensive national bibliography.

Finance

17. It will be appreciated that the implementation of these proposals to provide a library service on a national basis require that there shall be one fund for the financing of such an organization, and we consider it essential that the nation-wide service should be financed from Federation funds and that all existing public libraries, including subscription libraries and book clubs should be absorbed into a nation-wide service. Such a service would also result in great economies in book purchase in that rare books or expensive books would be bought sparingly, whereas otherwise they might be dupli-

cated unnecessarily by several independent libraries and some important books which should be available in the country might not be purchased at all.

18. The present method of making grants (usually far too small to be of any real value) to subscription libraries is no substitute for a national library policy.

Public libraries should cater for all needs of the whole of the population who should be entitled to free membership; they should therefore be a complete charge on public funds.

A Library Board

19. In order to ensure the satisfactory administration of a national library service, it is recommended that it should be administered by a Library Board consisting of:—

The Minister of Education,
The Director of Education,
One member appointed by each State and Settlement Government,
One member appointed by the University of Malaya,
One member appointed by the Federation Adult Education Service,
One member appointed by the Malayan Public Library Association,
One member appointed by the Malayan Library Group,
Three members appointed by the High Commissioner.

This Board would have full executive powers for the provision of public library service on a national scale for the whole community including the purchase of books and equipment, the appointment of a Librarian and the training of staff, the maintenance of a standard of library service and library buildings throughout the Federation, the compilation of union catalogues of books and periodicals and a national bibliography, the organization of national and international inter-lending of books between libraries, and such other projects as may from time to time be considered necessary for the best functioning of a national library service. A function of the Board would be to arrange for the training of librarians and in this connection it is recommended that suitable assistants working in libraries which would be taken over by the national library service on its formation should, if not already qualified, be sent on overseas scholarships to schools of librarianship and that eventually a School of Librarianship in Malaya should be organized.

20. Although it is recommended that the provision of premises should be the responsibility of local authorities, this is so fundamentally important to the success of a public library that it is considered essential that the Board should lay down standards for library buildings and that its officers should be charged with the responsibility of making sure that local buildings meet with pre-determined requirements with regard to area, location, lighting maintenance, etc., and should advise on the planning of new buildings.

Legislation

21. In order to put a national scheme of library service into operation it is first of all necessary to provide legislation to raise funds and to authorise the appointment of a Library Board and determination of its functions. The UNESCO Seminar held in India in October last recommended that legislation should be in general terms but provide for the following:—

(i) an opportunity for developing a public library service available to all people on a basis of free and equal access;
(ii) an independent service, not attached to another department;
(iii) the constitution of a library board;
(iv) the provision of adequate public finance.

Appointment of Director

22. As soon as legislation is passed it will be necessary to appoint a suitable

experienced and qualified Librarian as Director of the national library service. He would survey the library position and make detailed recommendations on finance and organization, on the training of library staff, and on the terms of incorporation of existing libraries within the national library service.

Programme of Development

23. Although it would be for the Director to advise the Board as to which aspects of the library services should be developed first it might not be inappropriate to suggest that special attention should be given at an early stage to

(*a*) libraries for school children, and

(*b*) the provision of books through the post to individual readers.

Children are, and it is to be expected will be for several years to come, greater readers (of vernacular books particularly) than adults, and consequently good school libraries, or perhaps books for adults and children in schools or community centres, are desirable as a means of distribution of books quickly by using an existing organization. Secondary schools should have large libraries of their own in a separate room and these should comprise books in connection with the student's studies and books for recreation. Such libraries should be staffed by a Librarian without full-time teaching responsibilities.

Another important function of the national library service, especially in the first few years, is the provision of a postal request service, so that teachers, students, and others could have books posted to them to meet their immediate needs. Such a service would be of particular value to those undertaking private study and research. Teachers in outlying areas and students studying externally for university degrees are in urgent need of books which can only be supplied by postal services. This presumes a large reservoir of books and could only function immediately from existing libraries. It would take several years to build up a really adequate library for this purpose.

24. Another urgent task is the provision of literature in vernacular languages. Although Malay literature is coming from Indonesia there is an urgent need for literature adapted to local needs at both the recreational and vocational level. The work of the Literature Bureau in providing books in all the vernacular languages both by commissioning the writing of books and translating suitable works in other languages, is essential in order that a library service may be able to disseminate literature in the vernacular languages. The publication of such books in local languages is of particular importance to children, young people and newly literates.

Summary of Recommendations

25. The Malayan Library Group considers that it is urgently necessary to introduce legislation to establish a Library Board and to appoint a suitably experienced Director in order to provide a national bibliographical centre and a nation-wide system of free public libraries for the people of Malaya.

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